

SOCIAL CHANGE IN INDIA

A Textbook of Sociology for Class XII

SOCIAL CHANGE IN INDIA

A Textbook of Sociology for Class XII

(Semester IV)

Author

M.N. KARNA



राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद्
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING

First Edition

ISBN 81-7450-122-3

April 2003

Chaitra 1925

PD 76T SPA

© National Council of Educational Research and Training, 2003

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

- ❑ No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without the prior permission of the publisher.
- ❑ This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade, be lent, re-sold, hired out or otherwise disposed of without the publisher's consent, in any form of binding or cover other than that in which it is published.
- ❑ The correct price of this publication is the price printed on this page. Any revised price indicated by a rubber stamp or by a sticker or by any other means is incorrect and should be unacceptable.

OFFICES OF THE PUBLICATION DIVISION, NCERT

NCERT Campus	108, 100 Feet Road, Hosdakere	Navjivan Trust Building	CWC Campus
Sri Aurobindo Marg	Hall Extension, Banashankari III Stage	P.O. Navjivan	Opp. Dhanak Das Stop
NEW DELHI 110 016	BANGALORE 560 085	AHMEDABAD 380 014	Panihati, Kolkata 700 114

PUBLICATION TEAM

EDITORIAL	S. PERWAIZ AHMAD
PRODUCTION	ATUL SAXENA
COVER	AMIT KUMAR SRIVASTAVA

Rs. 20.00

Printed on NCERT watermark paper of 70 GSM

Published at the Publication Department by the Secretary, National Council of Educational Research and Training, Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi 110 016, and printed at Unique Press (P) Ltd. A-37 Sector IV, Noida.

FOREWORD

The present textbook, entitled *Social Change in India* for the fourth semester of Class XII is based on the new syllabus, developed in consonance with the spirit of *National Curriculum Framework for School Education-2000* (NCFSE-2000). It is for the first time that Sociology has been introduced as a discipline at the higher secondary stage. However, as a part of general education, some components of Sociology have been included in the curriculum of Social Sciences up to the secondary stage of school education.

The two-year course at the higher secondary stage has been divided into four semesters. There will be four textbooks, two for Class XI and two for Class XII. It has been suggested that in the schools where semester system has not yet been introduced, two semester courses may be taken up in one year. The present textbook is the fourth in the series of four textbooks. Keeping in view the age group of the learners and the recent developments in sociology, the contents of the textbook have been presented in a simple and comprehensive manner.

In the previous two textbooks, entitled *Introducing Sociology* and *Understanding Society*, sociology has been discussed as a discipline. Its basic concepts, research methods, structure of society and main thinkers of sociology have also been discussed. In the third textbook, entitled *Structure of Indian Society*, topics like unity in diversity—a special characteristic of the Indian society, social, economic and cultural differentiations of caste, class and tribe, information about the different Indian institutions, deprived groups along with approaches to the study of Indian society etc. have been highlighted. The present textbook mainly deals with the social changes that have taken place in various fields. The textbook also lays emphasis on the structural and cultural changes in India and on how economic development, legislations, education and mass media have been instrumental in bringing about social change in the country. Apart from this, the textbook also throws light on various social movements and patterns of social deviance. All the topics have been presented in a comprehensive manner which would familiarise the learners with the developments and changes that have recently taken place in our society.

I express my sincere gratitude to the experts, the author and the subject teachers from different universities, colleges and schools who have contributed towards the development, review and finalisation of the manuscript of the textbook.

CONSTITUTION OF INDIA

Part IV A

Fundamental Duties of Citizens

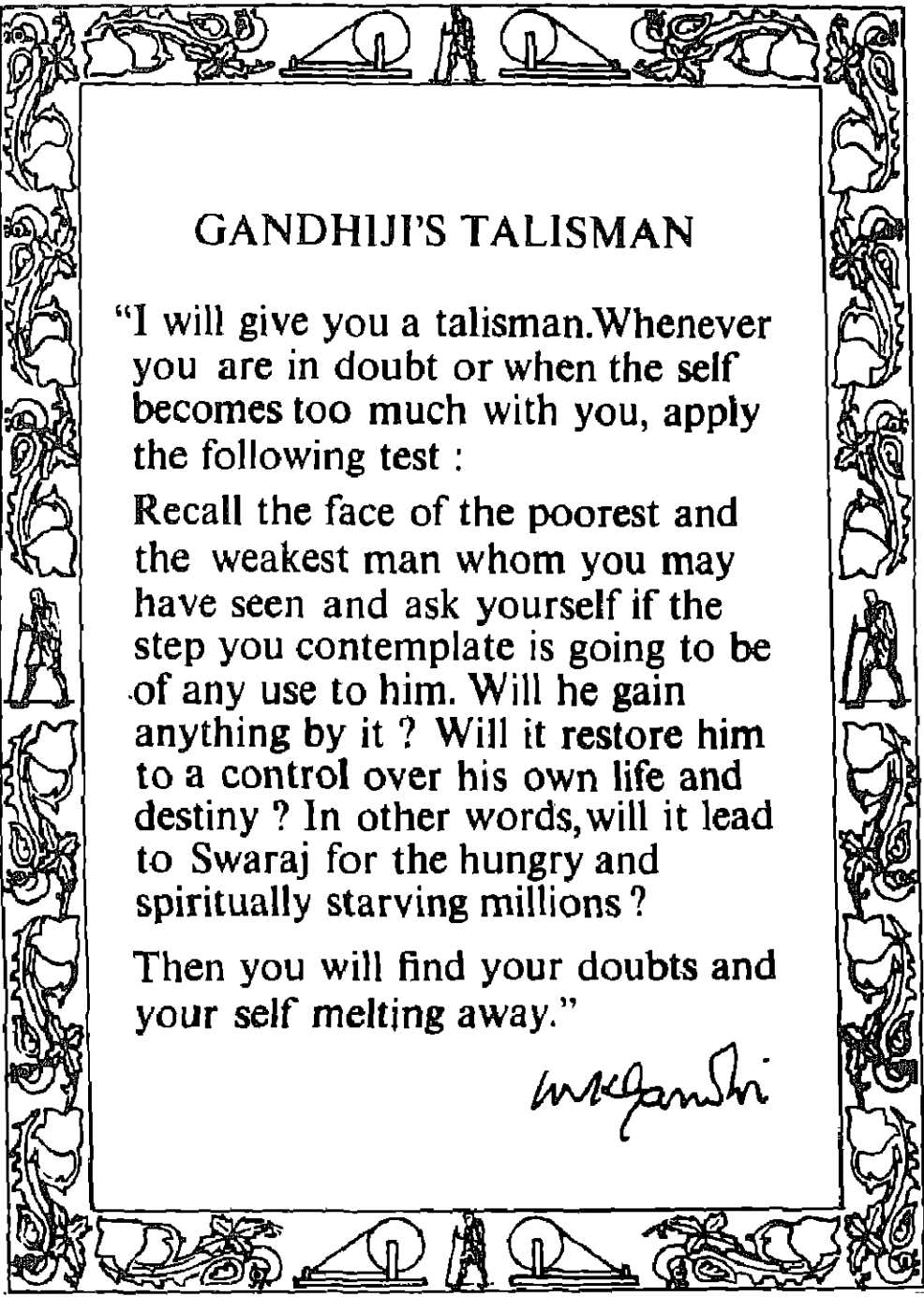
ARTICLE 51A

Fundamental Duties – It shall be the duty of every citizen of India –

- (a) to abide by the Constitution and respect its ideals and institutions, the National Flag and the National Anthem;
- (b) to cherish and follow the noble ideals which inspired our national struggle for freedom;
- (c) to uphold and protect the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India;
- (d) to defend the country and render national service when called upon to do so;
- (e) To promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India transcending religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities; to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women;
- (f) to value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture;
- (g) to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers, wild life and to have compassion for living creatures;
- (h) to develop the scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform;
- (i) to safeguard public property and to abjure violence;
- (j) to strive towards excellence in all spheres of individual and collective activity so that the nation constantly rises to higher levels of endeavour and achievement.

CONTENTS

Foreword	v
1. Structural Processes of Change	1
2. Cultural Processes of Change	14
3. State and Social Change	25
4. Legislation and Democratic Decentralisation	36
5. Economic Development and Social Change	47
6. New Groups, Classes and Globalisation	57
7. Education and Social Change	69
8. Mass Media and Cultural Change	77
9. Dissent and Social Change	86
10. Social Deviance	99



GANDHIJ'S TALISMAN

"I will give you a talisman. Whenever you are in doubt or when the self becomes too much with you, apply the following test :

Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man whom you may have seen and ask yourself if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him. Will he gain anything by it ? Will it restore him to a control over his own life and destiny ? In other words, will it lead to Swaraj for the hungry and spiritually starving millions ?

Then you will find your doubts and your self melting away."

M.K. Gandhi

CHAPTER 1

Structural Processes of Change

Change is a fact of human life. We may not be aware of it in our day-to-day experience but it continues to affect us in one way or the other. A hundred and thousand years might be a moment in the life of rocks and mountains but in human society changes take place in the course of merely a generation or two. Think of a situation in which your grandmother was living in a village where a large number of family members were staying together in one household. She had to maintain *purdah* and was not allowed to come out of the four walls of the house till she had become old. Now compare it with the condition of your mother. Do you not find a change in the structure of your own family, now when only a few members are staying together. Your uncle is living in another household with his wife and children. Likewise, your grandfather was an agriculturist but your father might have shifted to the urban area to take up a job in a government office. You will notice several corresponding changes even in the life-styles of your own family. These alterations have occurred merely in a generation or two. A close look will

reveal changes both in the structure and function of family and in patterns of occupations.

It is this dimension of change that we intend to study in the present course. Our focus will be on the nature and extent of social change in contemporary Indian society. The study of social change in India is important for several reasons. It tells us how contemporary Indian society is transforming from a traditional society to a modern developed society. It shows how changes are occurring in our social institutions and what are the factors bringing about such changes. It also indicates our achievements as a nation and identifies problems and setbacks in certain areas of our life.

Social change is a process, in the sense that it involves a series of events over a period of time. The idea of continuity is implied in it and shows a sequence of operations that bring about change. Thus, the notion of process indicates two major dimensions of social change—its nature and direction. While the nature of change reveals content of change, the direction speaks about the line in which it is moving. We intend to

discuss here both the substance and the factors of change.

Sociologists in India have analysed the process of social change under two broad categories—structural processes and cultural processes. Structural processes of change due a transformation in the network of social relationships. Caste, kinship, family and occupational groups constitute some of the structural realities. Change in these relationships is a structural change. When the traditional agrarian system based on family labour is transformed into agrarian system based on hired labour with a view to produce for the market, we may call it a structural change. The transformation of joint family to nuclear family brings about change in structure and function of family. It is through the process of differentiation of roles that structural change takes place. To put it differently, role of a social institution changes due to specific sequence of events making it more effective in the changed situation. In fact structural differentiation of roles leads to functional specialisation. Reverting to our earlier example, in addition to procreation and rearing of children, joint family performed numerous roles in traditional society in the fields of education, occupation and social security. But after its transformation into nuclear family most of these functions have been taken over by specialised agencies such as schools, economic organisations, government departments and other institutions. Structural change as a result of role

differentiation is noticed in almost all domains of social life.

You are already familiar with the factors of social change. Therefore, we shall focus on structural processes of social change namely, industrialisation, Westernisation and modernisation.

INDUSTRIALISATION

Science is an important element of human heritage that produces a systematic knowledge of nature. Technology, on the other hand, is that element which contains the application of this knowledge. In this sense, technology has a utilitarian goal. It has developed mainly due to a desire to apply it for the advantage of common people. This goal has been realised in almost every sphere—industry, agriculture, transport, communication and such other areas. The rapid changes that we experience in our day-to-day life are related to the development of new techniques, new inventions and new modes of production. The application of modern technology in industry has influenced not only our economic life but also our social and cultural system.

Industrialisation is a process of technological advancement from domestic production with simple tools to large-scale factory based production. However, sociologically, the term implies a process of economic and social changes arising out of the change in the structure of industry. Industrialisation involves a broad range of social factors that deeply affect the character of social

life. For instance, factories give rise to elaborate division of labour, new work culture, etc.

Industrialisation in India

A wide network of domestic and cottage industries were existing in India even prior to British colonial rule. But modern large-scale industry came only during the later part of the nineteenth century after the Industrial Revolution of Europe. Between the 1850's when the first major industries started, and 1914 India had established the world's largest jute manufacturing industry, the fifth largest cotton textile industry and the third largest railway network. In this manner, India had almost a century of industrial development on the eve of the independence.

After the independence, the pace of industrialisation was significantly accelerated during the periods of Five-Year Plans. It saw the expansion and diversification of the industrial structure with the establishment of several new units. In 1951, there were only two major units producing iron and steel. The number of such major steel plants increased to six by 1980s with the installed capacity of 80 lakh tonnes. The country has made considerable progress in the field of new industries, agricultural tractors, electronics and fertiliser etc., which were practically nonexistent in 1951. The textile industry is no longer confined to cotton and jute textiles but large number of units producing different types of synthetic fibres. An important

feature of industrial growth after the independence has been the rapid expansion of the public sector enterprises. These produce diverse products such as steel, coal, heavy and light engineering goods, locomotives, aircrafts, petroleum products and fertilizers. The brief sketch of the industrial growth in India may give us an idea of the extent of industrialisation that has taken place in the country since attaining the independence.

Social Consequences of Industrialisation

We may now turn our attention to the economic and social consequences of industrialisation. Our economic life has witnessed tremendous structural change in the wake of industrialisation. Production has been brought substantially to the factory. Elaborate division of labour, specialisation of tasks and the growth of a class of industrial workers have resulted from changes in the industrial system. Similarly, the nature of agricultural production has also changed because of change in agricultural practices. With the alteration in agricultural practices, alterations have also occurred in agrarian relations and the life-styles of farm households.

Moreover, industrialisation has changed the family mode of production and women are increasingly found in farms, firms and factories to perform different tasks. The new economic role has placed women in the new

environment where they experience the changed social status. The renewed status of women in turn has brought greater participation of women in decision making in the family. These changes have occurred due to occupational diversification that has been brought about by industrialisation. For example, it is not essential that all working members of a family will get jobs in similar occupations and professions and will be posted at the same place. One member, as for example, may be engaged in the cultivation of family land in Uttar Pradesh and the other may take up an employment as an engineer in Chennai. Under these circumstances, the break-up of a joint family into small nuclear families is natural. Such structural changes are also accompanied by functional distinctiveness. For example, the traditional joint family as mentioned earlier, was a multifunctional institution. It had innumerable economic, educational, recreational, socialisational and biological functions. Now, except for the biological and socialisational functions of the family, most of the other functions have been taken over by formal economic organisations, associations and the state.

Development of transport and communication have resulted in far-reaching consequences. Railways, automobiles and marine transportations have not only increased spatial mobility but have also quickened the rate of internal and external migration. A large number of people are migrating

from rural to urban areas to take up new occupations. Similarly, both skilled and unskilled women and men are travelling out of the country in search of better careers.

Changes are also witnessed in the system of social stratification. Significant changes are observed in case of caste system, which is an important structural reality of Indian social system. The separation between caste and occupation is a significant change that has taken place. The occupational diversification has made several occupations 'caste free'. It is, however, more in towns than in villages and even greater in the large industrialised cities. A considerable number of people located earlier at the lower levels of caste hierarchy and engaged in caste-based occupations are now entering into new occupations. Likewise, castes considered higher in the hierarchy are coming forward for occupations not preferred earlier. The members of lower castes dispensed with traditional occupations primarily because they were considered 'impure' and were endowed with low status besides being less profitable. On the other hand, members of upper castes such as *Brahman*, *Rajput* and *Kayasth* in north India were compelled to take up work like manual labourers, peons in offices and such other low status jobs. In addition to modifications in occupational structure and mobility, changes are seen in the inter-caste power structure.

We have so far analysed the socio-economic consequences of

industrialisation but we should not overlook one basic fact in this regard. The way in which a society responds to the industrial changes depend on its own creative genius and social environment. We, therefore, find a substantial difference between one society and another in the degree to which each has changes taking place as a result of industrialisation.

URBANISATION

Urbanisation is a process by which people instead of living in villages start living in towns and cities. It involves a mode by which agriculture-based habitat is transformed into non-agricultural urban habitat. The growth of urban centres is the result of accelerated industrial and service functions. An increase in the size of towns and cities leading to growth of urban population is the most significant dimension of urbanisation. These centres are essentially non-agricultural in character.

Urbanisation as a structural process of change is related to industrialisation but it is not always the result of industrialisation. In certain cases, urbanisation has taken place even without industrialisation. Industrialisation is always connected with economic growth but we cannot say the same about urbanisation.

Urban environment produces a particular kind of social life which Louis Wirth, a core member of the Chicago School, calls urbanism. Social life in cities is more formal and

impersonal. The relationship is based on a complex division of labour and is contractual in nature.

Urbanisation in India

India is a land of villages and will remain so for decades to come. However, it does not mean that cities have been absent from this vast sub-continent. Existence of cities in India can be traced back to as early as third millennium B.C. Archeological excavations reveal older traces of urbanisation. Historians tell us that a truly urban civilisation emerged in the Indus Valley with Mohenjodaro and Harappa as important urban centres. In addition to these two cities, several other urban settlements such as Kalibangan in northern Rajasthan, Lothal in Gujarat and Banawali in Haryana also emerged as the major centres. In the subsequent period, urbanisation was not confined to a particular area. This phase of urbanisation finds mention in the post-Vedic literature in the north and Sangam literature in the south. The Buddhist texts also mention about the existence of the urban centres. Furthermore, urbanisation during the medieval times spread out from Srinagar in the north to Madurai in the south. This period was marked more by the revival of old cities than the establishment of new cities and towns. These pre-industrial cities, however, existed primarily as centres of pilgrimage, as royal capitals and as trading centres.

Cities with modern industrial character grew in India only after

contact with the West. The process of urbanisation was accelerated during the British colonial regime. The British Indian administration promoted urbanisation on a large scale. The major port towns of Kolkata, Mumbai and Chennai owe their beginning, growth and importance to the colonial efforts. Similarly, regional summer capitals were established in remote mountainous areas like Shillong and Shimla. The princely states did not develop as fast but even they had capital towns. Some of the princely states like Hyderabad, Indore, Jaipur and Mysore had population exceeding one lakh.

The urban scenario changed remarkably after the independence. The proportion of urban population to the total population increased from 17.6 per cent in 1951 to 25.7 per cent in 1991. The number of cities with population of one million or more increased from 5 to 23 during the same period. According to the census of 2001 urban population stands at 27.78 per cent and number of cities having population more than one million has increased to 35. The noteworthy growth of urban population after the independence has been largely due to the rapid increase in population, rural-urban migration, city-centred industrialisation and the over all neglect of villages.

The emerging trends of urbanisation in India reveal that urban migration is fairly significant. A large number of people from rural areas are shifting not only to big cities but even

to medium-sized cities and small towns. Distance is not a barrier. One readily finds villagers moving from far-flung areas of north Indian states to the cities in south India. Migrants are mainly employed in manufacturing and service occupations. Besides, the seasonal migration of unskilled labourers, too, has become common. We find labourers from Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Orissa working on agricultural farms of Punjab, Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh. Labourers begin with seasonal migration and later on start settling permanently in areas of their choice.

Social Effects of Urbanisation

Let us now turn to social effects of accelerated urbanisation. Urbanisation has altered the structure of joint family as a result of occupational diversification. Consequently, the functions of family and kinship have declined considerably. The traditional family norms are relaxed and interpersonal relationship have become more formal. An urban child now grows within much smaller world. No kinsmen are available in nuclear family to take care of her/him. The child has to select playmates outside the family. In this manner, the child develops a new type of personality characterised by ideas of freedom and innovation. Such a situation is remarkably different from the environment of dependence found in a joint family. The nature of love and affection in interpersonal relationship has also changed. While children and

their mothers receive considerable attention, sentiments and attachment towards other relatives have weakened. Likewise, the division of domestic duties between wife and husband is changing in the urban settings. They both share domestic duties, as there no other adult member is available to share the burden.

Thus, social life in urban areas faces isolation due to diminishing kinship obligations. Several ties that formerly bound members of the family to group and community life are now broken. Consequently, the quality of human relationships tends to become more formal and impersonal.

Another visible change is in the domain of caste identity. Urban dwellers participate in networks that include persons of several castes. Individual achievement and modern status symbols have become more important than caste identity. Caste norms are not strictly maintained which is manifested in commensal relations, marital alliances and in occupational relations. It is, thus, possible to suggest that urban way of life has made people think more as individuals than as members of a particular caste. The importance of ascription as the basis of social status is declining and the significance of achievement is taking its place. The level of education, nature of occupation and the level of income are now major indicators of one's achievement in an urban setup. Therefore, people recognise education, occupation and income as prerequisites for higher

social status. It does not mean that the achieved status has completely replaced ascribed status and class has fully overshadowed caste.

It is, however, necessary to clarify that changes brought about by urbanisation have not altogether replaced the traditional patterns of family, kinship and caste. They go through adaptations and their functions are not completely eroded.

Urban Problems

We have already seen how urbanisation is proceeding at considerable pace in India. It has affected different domains of people's life. The expansion of urban centres has also given rise to a variety of problems. The physical space is dingy, quality of life is poor and urban governance unimaginative. Overcrowding and pollution, housing and slums, crime and delinquency, alcoholism and drug abuse are a few of them. We shall discuss some of them which have far reaching consequences for the country.

Urban overcrowding is the result of the massive size of India's urban population. Its impact is visible in declining services in the areas of housing, water supply, sanitation, transport, power supply and employment opportunity. Increasing number of homeless people, high rental enhance and a scramble for the few available houses are commonly found in most of the cities and towns. The density of urban population in India works out to be around 3,500 persons

per square kilometre in 1991. This is more than the accepted norm of 400 per square kilometre. Thus, urban areas have more people than they can support with the available infrastructure.

Related to the problem of housing and overcrowding is the problem of slums. The slum is an area of over-aged neglected houses where people live in poverty without minimum civic amenities. The estimates of India's urban population living in slums vary widely. However, according to one estimate, not less than 45 million people were living in slums in 1995 and as the urban population is increasing fast, their numbers must have increased by now. It is said that the Indian population living in slums is more than the total population of about 107 countries of the world. Ordinarily, larger the city, the more the people live in slums. Naturally, metros like Mumbai, Delhi and Kolkata have more slums than the small and medium size towns. In 1991, slum-dwellers formed 45 per cent of the population in Mumbai, 44 per cent in Delhi and 42 per cent in Kolkata. The situation is no better in other metropolises like Chennai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Ahmadabad etc. In reality, the problems of slums are multiplying in the wake of city's incapacity to meet the rising demands of growing population.

Pollution is another major problem of cities. There are several sources of rising pollution. Cities discharge 40 per cent to 60 per cent of their entire sewage and industrial effluents into the adjoining rivers. The smaller towns

dump garbage and excreta to the nearest waterways through their open drains. Likewise, urban industries pollute the atmosphere with smoke and gases from their old chimneys. Vehicular emission in Delhi accounts for 64 per cent of its air pollution. In fact, Delhi has the dubious distinction of being one of the most polluted cities in the world. The poison that we put in the environment comes back to us through our air, water and food. It gradually causes diseases and disorders making life miserable and hazardous.

The issue of environmental pollution in urban areas has been recognised and steps have been taken to ease the situation. Even the Supreme Court of India intervened and ordered closure of polluting industrial units in Delhi. Recently, the use of non-polluting Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) has been made mandatory for buses and three-wheelers in Delhi as per the order of the Supreme Court.

There are a number of other problems faced by urban centres which are not discussed here for the sake of brevity. Important among them are the problems of urban poverty, urban planning and urban governance.

MODERNISATION

Modernisation is an idea before it is a process. As it is an idea, there is no agreement among social scientists on its meaning and interpretation. In the decades after the Second World War it was believed in industrial capitalist

countries such as Britain and the United States that the key to economic development in the Third World was modernisation. The concept of modernisation, thus, emerged as an explanation of how these societies developed through capitalism. By providing such an explanation Western scholars desired to convince the underdeveloped countries like India that economic development was possible under capitalism.

According to this approach, modernisation depends primarily on introduction of technology and the knowledge required to make use of it. Besides, several social and political prerequisites have been identified to make modernisation possible. Some of these prerequisites are:

1. increased levels of education,
2. development of mass media,
3. accessible transport and communication,
4. democratic political institutions,
5. more urban and mobile population,
6. nuclear family in place of extended family,
7. complex division of labour,
8. declining public influence of religion, and;
9. developed markets for exchange of goods and services in place of traditional ways of meeting such needs.

Modernisation is, thus, supposed to be the result of the presence of these prerequisites in the social system. It is

clear that the term modernisation has been used here in a very broad sense. We, therefore, find different views about the scope and area to be covered by the concept of modernisation.

Some sociologists limit modernisation to its structural aspect, others emphasise its cultural dimension. A few studies highlight the issue of political modernisation and still others analyse its psychological meaning. Of course, the treatment of the concept in terms of it being a process of social change is found in Learner's writing. Daniel Thorner in his essay on 'Modernisation', included in *Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences*, explains the modernisation in these words: "Modernisation is the current term for an old process — the process of social change whereby less developed societies acquired characteristics common to more developed societies." He further writes, "Modernisation, therefore, is the process of social change in which development is the economic component." Obviously this understanding of the term corresponds with the meaning which we have given to the term at the beginning of our discussion. Accordingly, modernisation is a process of change, which takes a country from underdevelopment to development. It produces social environment for economic development. The growth in industrialisation, urbanisation, national income and per capita income are taken as criteria of development.

However, while accepting the economic criteria of development, some sociologists have added non-economic

criteria to judge development. They argue that rising output alone is not sufficient to assess the level of development. A society has to move from rising output to self-sustaining growth. Therefore, non-economic criteria such as the level of education, function of media, growth of communication and social norms conducive to change have to be taken into consideration.

The meaning of modernisation given above incorporates, primarily, structural aspects of change. In other words, under modernisation structural transformation takes place in economy, polity and social institutions. It is to be noted here that the concept of modernisation has also been explained in cultural terms. In this sense, modernisation implies change in values and attitudes. Modernity involves values and norms that are universal in nature. Explaining this aspect of modernisation Yogendra Singh suggests that modernisation implies a rational attitude towards issues and their evaluation from a universal viewpoint. Thus, technological advancement and economic growth are not the sole criterion to judge the level of modernisation of a society. The commitment to scientific world-view and humanistic ideas are equally important.

Moreover, the idea of modernisation has also been analysed in terms of the paired concepts of tradition and modernity. It has been argued that modernity stands as opposite of tradition. In this sense, all the underdeveloped societies are

characterised as traditional and the developed societies as modern. Modernisation, thus, implies a change from tradition to modernity. Change occurs, according to this view, in predictable direction. In other words, in order to modernise, every society has to follow the same direction and adopt a similar path. All the existing values and structures have to be replaced by the new values and structures.

Nonetheless, sociologists from the developing countries are critical of this understanding of modernisation. They maintain that modernisation does not stand as a polar opposite to tradition. Traditional values and institutions are not necessarily discarded while taking up new values in the process of change. Society adopts new values because they are considered more efficient and rewarding. In view of this, these sociologists hold that modernisation would develop typical forms in different societies. Patterns of modernisation, thus, may vary from society to society. The discussion shows that processes of modernisation involve both structural and cultural dimensions. However, given the present context, we shall deal with modernisation primarily as a structural process of change.

Modernisation in India

Some sociologists make a distinction between social change and modernisation in order to assess the nature of change in the traditional Indian society. Though, social change occurred in traditional India, it was essentially pre-modern in nature. One

traditional institution was just replaced by the other and no basic structural change took place in social system and culture.

Historically, modernisation in India started from the establishment of the British rule and has continued even after the independence. The nature and direction of modernisation during these two phases have been different. Therefore, it is appropriate to examine the processes of modernisation under two distinct phases—the colonial phase and the post-colonial phase.

As has been mentioned earlier, modernisation in India commenced after the arrival of the British rule. The contact with the West brought about far reaching changes in social structure and cultural institutions. Changes were witnessed in almost all-important areas of life. The British administration introduced new arrangements in legal, agrarian, educational and administrative domains. Most of these led to structural modernisation. For instance, the bureaucratic system of administration and judiciary introduced by them were based on modern rational norms, which replaced the traditional Indian legal norms, based on the principle of hierarchy and ascription. A similar transformation took place in the system of education and agrarian structure. The Western system of education was introduced towards the middle of the nineteenth century and expanded significantly thereafter. New patterns of land settlements such as *Zamindari*, *Raiyatwari* and *Mahalwari* covering

the whole of British India resulted in systematisation of revenue administration. Some other areas experiencing modernising trends were industrialisation, urbanisation, transport and communication, army and the emergence of industrial working class and so forth. The emergence and growth of a nationalist political leadership was also the result of growing modernisation of Indian society. In fact, the nationalist leadership became so strong towards the early part of the twentieth century that freedom movement itself generated a new culture of modernisation.

It is apparent from the above that the colonial phase of modernisation created a wide networks of structure and culture which were modern and had an all-India appeal. However, it is important to point out here that during the colonial phase the local regional structures of family, caste and village community remained more or less unaffected by the forces of modernisation. At these levels, the British, by and large, followed a policy of least interference. Consequently, we do not find much change in the structures of family, caste and village.

Let us, now, briefly examine the process of modernisation in the post-colonial India. Modernisation process has undergone some fundamental changes after the independence. Every domain of social system is under the active influence of modernising process. Modernisation has, now, become an integral part of the developmental strategy.

The political system has assumed a new shape after adoption of the parliamentary form of government based on adult franchise. Political parties have emerged as powerful organs of the system. Thus, democratic political structure has effectively led to increasing political consciousness among the people. The process of politicisation has, further, been accelerated through the *Panchayat Raj* institutions.

The foundations of traditional family structure have come under influence of legal reforms in marriage and inheritance. The family introduced equalitarian norms in family leading to raised status of women. Similarly, caste has assumed new functional roles. It has acquired an associational character. New consciousness has emerged among dalits. Increasing role of caste in politics is a pointer to this trend. Moreover, land reforms, too, have brought structural transformation in agrarian social structure.

However, it is pertinent to call attention to the fact that modernisation in India has not been a uniformly progressive movement. Two crucial issues may be pointed out in this regard. First, in the process of

modernisation several traditional institutions and activities have been reinforced. For example, religious preachers are using modern media to spread their ideas. Now, there is a television channel in India exclusively devoted to religious preaching. Caste associations are using new modes of communication to consolidate their position. Second, inconsistencies are visible in patterns of modernisation. Though structural change is witnessed in family, joint family loyalties and norms still prevail. Democratic participation is increasing despite of increasing caste conflicts.

What we wish to point out is that modernisation in India has not thoroughly dispensed with traditional institutions. Yogendra Singh has, appropriately, highlighted this fact in his study entitled *Modernisation of Indian Tradition*. He writes, "The form of traditional institutions may remain intact but their substance might undergo major transformations incorporating modernisation." In this sense modernisation process in India has acquired a typical form. Traditional institutions have displayed their potential for adaptations in course of change.

GLOSSARY

CONTRACTUAL RELATIONSHIP. It is a formal agreement between two or more parties in which the parties entering this relationship must give up their part of the bargain without abusing the terms of the agreement.

SEASONAL MIGRATION. The movements of agricultural labourers from one place to other during harvest time in search of employment.

EXERCISE

1. What is meant by structural change?
2. What are the significant changes in the sphere of industry after the Independence?
3. Explain the social and the economic consequences of industrialisation.
4. Distinguish between urbanisation and urbanism.
5. Discuss the impact of urbanisation on Indian society.
6. What is modernisation?
7. Explain the process of modernisation in India.

SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Rao, M.S.A. (ed.), *Urban Sociology in India*, Orient Longman, New Delhi, 1974.
2. Singh, Yogendra, *Modernisation of Indian Traditions*, Thomson Press Ltd., New Delhi, 1973.
3. Srinivas, M.N., *Social Change in Modern India*, Orient Longman, New Delhi, 1972.
4. Srinivas, M.N., *The Dominant Caste and Other Essays*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1987.
5. Singh, Yogendra, *Essays on Modernisation in India*, Manohar, Delhi, 1978.
6. Mishra, R.P., *Urbanisation in India : Challenges and Opportunities*, Regency Publications, New Delhi, 1998.

CHAPTER 2

Cultural Processes of Change

In the previous chapter we have examined the structural processes of change. You are familiar with the concept that culture is an accumulated store of symbols, ideas and material products which are transmitted from one generation to the other. Cultural forms regulate social activities. Thus, in the present context, cultural processes of change show the various ways through which Indian culture responds to numerous changes earlier introduced in India. The sources of change fall under two broader categories—endogenous and exogenous. While endogenous sources of change originate from within the society, exogenous sources flow from outside a particular society. Changes in the cultural structure of India have emanated from both endogenous and exogenous sources. In the following sections, the significance of these cultural processes has been discussed with the help of three concepts namely, Sanskritisation, Islamisation, Westernisation and Secularisation.

SANSKRITISATION

Sanskritisation has emerged as the most influential concept to explain

cultural and social changes in India. The term was first used by M. N. Srinivas in the course of his study of the Coorgs in erstwhile State of Mysore. Subsequently, further refinements have been brought in the concept by sociologists to effectively describe the process of cultural mobility in the traditional social structure in India.

According to Srinivas, "Sanskritisation is a process by which a 'low' Hindu caste, or tribal or other group changes its customs, ritual, ideology, and way of life in the direction of a high, and frequently, 'twice-born' caste." Srinivas found that lower castes, in order to raise their position in caste hierarchy, adopted some of the practices of the *Brahmans*. At the same time, these castes gave up some of their own customs, which were considered impure such as meat-eating, consumption of alcohol and animal sacrifice to their deities. They also emulated life-styles of the high caste *Brahmans* in terms of dress, food and rituals. By imitating these practices the lower castes claimed higher position over a period of time in the local hierarchy of castes. This process of mobility was initially called

Brahmanisation. But it was realised later that the process described by Brahmanisation was not a general trend and the lower castes in several cases adopted the practices of the non-Brahman higher castes. Therefore, the term Brahmanisation was replaced by Sanskritisation which was considered more appropriate.

Sanskritisation is an endogenous source of upward mobility for a caste. The mobility caused by this process, however, leads to only positional changes in the system. It does not result in structural change. Change occurs within the caste hierarchy. The caste system itself does not change.

Sanskritisation is not limited to Hindu castes. It takes place among the tribal groups. By resorting to Sanskritisation a particular tribe may claim even to be a caste. We notice this process of cultural change among the *Bhils* of western India, the *Gonds*, the *Ho* and the *Oraons* of central India. In this sense, Sanskritisation is a general process of acculturation. It provides a channel for vertical mobility of groups and communities. It reveals motivation for status enhancement through imitation of the customs, rituals and ideologies of the upper castes.

As mentioned earlier, only practices of the Brahmans are not adopted by the lower castes. There are other non-Brahman castes who act as models for adoption of ways of life. This aspect of Sanskritisation has been explained with the help of the concept of the 'dominant caste'. Srinivas describes it thus, "For a caste to be dominant, it should own a

sizeable amount of the arable land locally available, have strength of numbers and occupy a high place in the local hierarchy." Besides landownership, numerical strength and high ritual status, other factors like education, jobs in administration and urban sources of income have also contributed to the power and prestige of certain castes in rural areas. Dominant castes have localised existence and operate as reference models for Sanskritising castes. However, the process of cultural transmission through the local dominant castes takes different forms in different regions. If the dominant caste in a particular region is the *Brahman*, it will transmit Brahmanical features of Sanskritisation. But in case the locally dominant caste is a *Jat*, it will transmit *Jat* features. In this sense, Sanskritisation is an expression of a highly regional process of cultural change.

Nonetheless, it is necessary to point out that the regional pattern of Sanskritisation with its own dominant caste is not completely independent from an all-India system. Sources of influence as Srinivas says may be derived from wider Indian tradition such as 'pilgrimages, *hartkathas* and religious plays'. Srinivas gives the example of the Sanskritisation of the *Patidars* of Gujarat, which owes much to these sources and the influence of *Vallabhachari* and *Swaminarayan* sects.

However, the process of Sanskritisation is not always steady

and smooth. When lower castes begin to emulate life-styles of dominant castes it does not go unchallenged everytime. Minor changes in rituals and dress codes are ignored. But when the lower castes adopt important high-caste symbols, then it is not only contested, even punishments follow. Several examples of such contests and punishments have been reported from different regions of the country. When the *Nontyas*, a low caste of salt-makers in eastern Uttar Pradesh put on the sacred thread *en masse*, the upper caste landlords 'beat them, tore off the sacred thread and imposed a collective fine on the caste'. Similarly, in north Bihar, the high caste *Bhumihars* prevented the *Yadav (Ahir)* from assuming the symbols of upper caste status. Instances of such violent conflicts were not confined to north India. In the extreme south of India, the *Kallar*, a dominant caste announced eight prohibitions in December 1930 against the *Adi-Dravidas*, the disregard of which led to violent incidents. Their huts were set on fire, granaries were destroyed and even live-stock was looted.

In view of such a response of the dominant caste in a particular area, the lower castes adopted a different strategy to achieve the goal. They avoided imitating practices likely to disturb the dominant caste. They would move rather slowly. In some cases certain Sanskritising castes openly defied the commands.

Although Sanskritisation, more often than not, has local character but

it has occurred in every part of India. In this sense, it has been a major process of cultural change in Indian history. Historical evidence show that various aboriginal groups were assimilated in the hierarchy of castes according to their social position. Such processes also gave rise to new castes or sub-castes. The formation of new caste or sub-caste, in reality, reflected social mobility within the caste system.

Thus, in the historical sense Sanskritisation speaks of a process which brings about changes in the status of various castes. This process of cultural change allows not only imitation of life-styles but also brings new ideas and values. The *Bhakti* movement of medieval period is an important example in this respect. It was an all-India movement, which actively involved the low castes and the poor. The *Bhakti* saints pronounced that the dignity of human beings depended on their actions and not on their birth. It was because of this movement that several individuals from the lower castes including untouchables became religious leaders. Namdev was a tailor, Tukaram a shopkeeper, Ral a cobbler and Kabir a weaver. The movement had given a jolt to excessive ritualism and caste atrocities. It spread values of equality and social justice.

ISLAMISATION

It is to be noted here that another process of cultural change has also been operating in India, which is linked

to the process of Sanskritisation. Sociologists have called it Islamisation. Indian contact with Islam dates back to the eighth century. Today almost 14 per cent Indians follow Islam. It is, thus, an important religious tradition in our country.

The process of the spread of Islam called Islamisation is an integral part of our cultural heritage. Accordingly, there are two major aspects of Islamisation that attract our attention. First, the changes which have occurred in the life of the Muslims because of the endogenous change within the tradition of Islam in India. Second, the interaction between Hinduism and Islam during its long history which has produced a composite culture.

The significant development in this respect took place in the early phase of Islamic expansion and its consolidation. It broadly happened between A.D. 1206-1818. It was an important period for several reasons as Yogendra Singh says, "It was not only marked with periods of conflicts and tension but also led to many adaptations and cultural syncretism between the Hindu and the Islamic traditions." A more stable co-existence of Islam with the Hindu and other traditions were the natural consequence of this interaction.

When Islam reached India its social organisation had started transforming. 'Equality and brotherhood' continued to be an ideal but social gradations within Muslim society had already emerged. The ruling groups, at the time of arrival of Islam, consisted of upper groups.

They were called *Ashrafs*. It included four high status groups known as *Sayyid*, *Shelkh*, *Mughal* and *Pathan*. These groups later assumed caste-like features. They were both political and cultural torch-bearers and carried forward Islamic cultural tradition.

However, it is important to point out that during this phase numerous changes occurred within the Indian Muslim society. Changes came not through the external factors but because of the need of the new socio-cultural situation in which Islam was now placed.

The emergence and growth of the various orders of the Sufi thought was the most significant development in this regard. Sufis were persons of deep devotion. Sufism was the teaching that identified God with the universe. Sufis laid great emphasis on love as the link between God and the individual soul. Abul Fazl mentions the existence of seventeen Sufi orders in India in the sixteenth century. Some of the practices of the Sufis such as penance, fasting and holding the breath are traced to the Buddhist and Yogic influences. It is difficult to say with certainty whether Buddhist and Vedantic ideas influenced Sufism or the Sufi ideas came out of the *Qur'an*. What is important to note here is that there were many similarities in the ideas of the Sufis and the Hindu Yogis about the nature and relationship of God and the soul. This provided a basis for mutual tolerance and understanding.

Though there were several Sufi orders in India during the medieval

period only two acquired considerable influence during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. These were the *Chishti* and *Suharwardi* orders. Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti established the *Chishti* order in India. The most famous of the *Chishti* saints were Nizamuddin Auliya and Nasiruddin Chirag-e-Delhi. They associated freely with the people of the lower classes including the Hindus. They led a simple life and talked with people in Hindawi or Hindi. Their popularity also increased because of their musical recitations called *sama* in which often Hindi verses were used to make a greater impact on their listeners. The *Suharwardi* order entered India during the same period but its activities were confined mainly to Punjab and its surrounding areas.

Besides the *Sufi* tradition of Islam, there were other attempts to reconcile some aspects of the Hindu tradition with Islam. Among the Muslim rulers, Akbar's attempt to introduce a synthetic cult called *Din-e-Ilahi* is well known. A synthesis of Upanishadic ideas with Islam was advocated by Dara Shikoh. In the field of literature, Ameer Khusro contributed so much that his popularity continues till today. Many other Muslim poets and writers have also become part of our literary history. For instance, Jayasi, Nalei, Abdul Rahim Khan-e-Khana, Mirza Asdullah Khan Ghalib have been true representatives of our composite culture.

However, it should be remembered that cultural co-existence was only one

side of the story. A larger section of this tradition continued to develop on orthodox lines. The high-status groups enjoyed considerable influence under the Muslim rule and were actively involved in expansion of Islam. The situation further changed during the British regime. The liberal tradition was gradually taken over by conservative ideas and beliefs. At the local-regional level where the bulk of Muslims consisted of the converts from Hinduism a similar trend was visible. At this level Islamisation meant an upward social and cultural mobility among the converts to Islam. The desire for improvement in social status and corresponding increase in power and profit motivated lower castes to Islam. Of course, Islamisation through conversion did not always provide the gains but it was psychologically satisfying to the people. The large-scale conversion did not bring an automatic acceptance of their higher status either by the Hindus or by the Muslims. In this sense, Islamisation as a process of cultural change resembles Sanskritisation.

WESTERNISATION

In addition to Sanskritisation, Westernisation is the other major cultural process of change. Like Sanskritisation, the term Westernisation has also been made popular in Indian sociology by M. N. Srinivas. It has been used to analyse the exogenous source of social and cultural change in contemporary India. Srinivas, in his book *Social Change in*

Modern India explains Westernisation in these words, "the changes brought about in Indian society and culture as a result of over 150 years of British rule, and the term subsumes changes occurring at different levels—technology, institutions, ideology, values."

It is essential to keep in view that the concepts of Sanskritisation and Westernisation, have been used to explain social change in India in cultural not in structural terms. They do not refer to changes taking place in social structure. Secondly, the term, Westernisation rather than 'modernisation' have been favoured by sociologists because this term is neutral. It does not imply whether it is good or bad. Thus, in spite of its conceptual limitation, Westernisation is an appropriate term to describe the British impact on Indian culture.

We have already discussed in the previous chapter that modern industries were established in India after the Industrial Revolution in Britain. With the growth of science and technology in the West during the nineteenth century, factory production started in India, too. The expansion of industries required fast transport and communication. This in turn led to the beginning and extension of railways, post and telegraph and a wide network of roads. The growth of towns and cities was its natural consequence.

In the closing years of the eighteenth century new arrangements were made in the agrarian system. Modified systems of land settlements were

introduced. Important among them were *Zamindari*, *Raiyatwari* and *Mahalwari* settlements. A cadastral survey was conducted to prepare records of area and ownership of land. It was used to fix revenue and derive assured income from land.

Similarly, modern army, police force and administrative system reached India after the consolidation of the British rule. The introduction of modern legal system with organised courts substantially changed the judicial practices in the country.

The establishment of educational institutions was a development of far reaching significance. Though we had a traditional system of schooling even prior to the British regime but it was not open to all. Education was the privilege of a hand full of people belonging mainly to the high caste groups. In this sense, schools and colleges that were started during the first half of the nineteenth century introduced the system of modern education in India. The British also brought about printing press that facilitated publication of newspapers, books and magazines. The establishment of three universities at Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai in 1857 paved the way for higher education.

Moreover, Westernisation has brought new ideas and ideology. Among these ideas and values, the most important is what Srinivas calls humanitarianism. It is concerned with 'the welfare of all human beings irrespective of caste, economic position, religion, age and gender.' To put it little

differently, notions of equality, freedom and secularism are all involved in the basic idea of humanitarianism. In fact, Westernisation implies humanitarianism which in turn facilitated several reforms during the early nineteenth century. The abolition of inhuman practices such as Sati, female infanticide and slavery was the result of reforms initiated by the enlightened Indian leaders.

Another impact of Westernisation has been the emergence of commercial middle class and traders. Initially, it was confined to only those regions where British influence was potent. They were involved in jobs and vocations that required training and skills different from traditional modes of business and work. Though the people comprising this group were not culturally Westernised in the true sense of the term, their contact with the Western culture was visible. It was from this class that a new generation of professionals and educated groups emerged in subsequent phases of Westernisation.

It is fascinating to note here that Westernisation has also influenced political ideas and thinking. Nationalism and democracy emerged as two great ideas in the West. Both these ideas made a journey to different parts of the world. They came to India through Westernisation. Nationalism stands for the consciousness that gives rise to a nation. The nationalist urge in India started in the latter half of the nineteenth century. But before this urge could crystallise into a struggle for

freedom from British colonial rule, a desire to reform traditional Indian society emerged. The establishment of the *Brahmo Samaj* by Raja Ram Mohan Roy in Bengal in 1828 and the *Arya Samaj* by Swami Dayanand Saraswati in Gujarat in 1875 aimed at the reformation of Hinduism. The primary objective of these reform movements was to remove social evils of Indian society, namely rigidity of caste system and the low status of women.

Nationalism in India, as mentioned, was the result of the contact with the West. The newly educated groups were exposed to the ideals of liberty and democracy through the study of European history and English literature. The question of Indian political identity was relentlessly debated and gradually it led to the demand for freedom. It is not intended here to trace the growth of Indian nationalism through its long history. Our purpose is only to point out that the ideals of nationalism, democratic polity and secularism have come to India under specific historical context. These systems have been harbinger of cultural modernisation in India.

SECULARISATION

Secularisation is a process of social change through which the influence of religion declines in public affairs. Religion is replaced by other ways of explaining facts and events. The importance of religion in regulating social life decreases and it is taken over by utilitarian consideration. The interpretation of reality is in terms of

reason and rationality. When secularisation advances, science replaces religion as the primary approach to understand the natural and social worlds. Thus, the term secularisation implies that issues which were previously regarded as religious are no longer the same.

It has rightly been suggested that secularisation in India is the result of almost a century of Westernisation in the country. The process started with the consolidation of British rule and gradually picked-up momentum with the development of transport and communication. We have seen earlier that industrialisation and urbanisation increased spatial mobility. The people migrated from rural areas to urban areas and from towns to cities in large number. The spread of education changed value preferences which in turn furthered the cause of secularisation.

Before discussing the domains of secularisation, it would be proper to indicate how both Sanskritisation and secularisation are simultaneously operating in contemporary India. Explaining the reason M. N. Srinivas writes, "Of the two, secularisation is the more general process, affecting all Indians, while Sanskritisation affects only Hindus and tribal groups. Broadly, it would be true to say that secularisation is more marked among the urban and educated groups, and Sanskritisation among the lower Hindu castes and tribes."

Historically, secularisation of Indian social and cultural life became intense

with the new developments in social and cultural arena. The struggle for freedom especially in its Gandhian phase unleashed several forces that increased secularisation. The civil disobedience campaign launched by Mahatma Gandhi mobilised the masses. Likewise, mobilisation of people against social evils in Hindu society such as untouchability also contributed to increased secularisation.

This process was further strengthened with the attaining of independence in 1947, and with the adoption in 1950 of a Republican Constitution, India emerged as a secular state. The Constitution adopted in free India guarantees freedom of religion. It declares that there will be no discrimination on the basis of religion in employment and education. The introduction of universal adult franchise and the equality of citizens before law were some other steps undertaken to ensure the secular character of the Indian State.

We shall now discuss the process of secularisation of Indian social and cultural life. The secularisation process has affected every aspect of personal and social life. Some changes are, however, apparent whereas some others may be disguised. Its effects are not uniformly felt. For example, urban dwellers are generally much more influenced by it than the rural folk. Educated sections are deeply moved compared to the illiterates. Similarly, some regions of the country are more exposed to the secularisation process than others.

The secularisation process has made its most effective impact on the ideas of pollution and purity. You are already aware that ideas of pollution and purity are central to the lives of people in general and among the Hindus in particular. The notion of pollution and purity determines the hierarchy of castes. It defines the social distance between various castes. Some castes are considered superior and others inferior because some are considered pure and others are taken as relatively impure. This idea is not only visible in the structure of caste hierarchy but also in food, occupation, styles of life and daily routine. Meat eating and consumption of liquor are considered polluting but vegetarianism and teetotalism are pure practices. A similar distinction is made in occupations. Occupations that involve manual labour are regarded lower than those, which do not require such work. The most conspicuous expression of the prevailing notions of pollution and purity has been the inhuman practice of untouchability in the caste system.

The process of secularisation has considerably reduced and weakened the ideas of pollution and purity. People no longer try to know the caste background of fellow passengers in a bus or a train. They hardly bother about it while visiting restaurants and hotels. The rules of pollution are not observed at the place of work particularly in the urban settings. The styles of life are influenced more by the requirements of jobs and occupations than by caste and religion. The fact

being emphasised here is that the orthodox elements of caste and religion are gradually losing prestige in the face of growing secularisation of life and culture. As a result of increased secularisation and mobility caste system has ceased to sustain those values that were hitherto considered essential.

Nonetheless, it is important to point out that while religious values attached to the caste system is disappearing, its role in secular domains like politics is increasing. Now, people are being mobilised on caste lines for political purposes. It is a fascinating sociological question, which needs to be probed, but is currently beyond our scope.

There are two other areas, which have been affected by the process of secularisation. They are family system and village community. While the gradual structural transformation in family produces change in interpersonal relationships, other elements of family life are equally affected. Ceremonies and rituals performed in family such as marriage rituals, funeral rites, worship of family deities all are assuming a different character. They are either curtailed or shortened to suit the convenience of the concerned family. Now, some of these ceremonies are used as occasions to display and advertise affluence. The ostentation associated with wedding receptions has nothing to do with religious practices, which were earlier observed at the time of marriage. Likewise several community festivals have acquired new meaning and

observances. *Baisakhi* in Punjab is celebrated more as a cultural festival than a religious one. People from different religious groups join and enjoy its festivity. *Durgapuja* and *Dushahara* have assumed new character and their religious rituals have receded into the background. Hundreds of *pandals* are tastefully decorated displaying various contemporary social and political issues. The latest trend in organising *Iftar* party during the holy month of *Ramzan* is also a pointer in this respect.

The village community is also influenced by changes taking place in economic, political and cultural fields. The internal differentiation created by economic forces has altered the harmonious community feelings among villagers. Levels of aspirations have heightened in the wake of numerous developmental measures undertaken by the government. The attitude of surrender before fate and divine will, commonly found among the poor and deprived, has been replaced by the attitude of defiance. They are the products of the process of secularisation.

GLOSSARY

TWICE-BORN CASTE. The upper caste who undergoes the initiation or the 'thread ceremony' to become *divij*, known as twice born.

ACCULTURATION. The process by which a dominant group imposes its culture so effectively on subordinate groups that they become virtually indistinguishable from the dominant culture is called acculturation.

DIN-E-ILAH. A new religion started by the Mughal emperor Akbar which was a synthesis of many religions.

RAIYATWARI AND MAHALWARI. A system of payment of land revenue imposed by the British government on the peasants, where the peasants had to pay a certain amount of revenue for their land to the *Zamindars*.

EXERCISE

1. What is meant by Sanskritisation?
2. Who is a dominant caste in Indian society?
3. Explain the process of Sanskritisation.
4. Discuss the positive and the negative impacts of Islamisation in India.
5. Explain the impact of Westernisation in India.
6. What is meant by secularisation?

SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Srinivas, M.N., *Social Change in Modern India*, Orient Longman, New Delhi, 1972.
2. Srinivas, M.N., *The Dominant Caste and Other Essays*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1987.
3. Desai, A.R., *India's Path of Development*, Popular Prakashan, Mumbai, 1984.
4. Beteille, Andre, *Caste : Old and New*, Asia Publishing House, Mumbai, 1969.
5. Singh, Yogendra, *Modernisation of Indian Tradition*, Rawat Publications, 1988.

CHAPTER 3

State and Social Change

Before analysing the role of state in social change, we must clarify the notion of state itself for better understanding of the subject. A conventional definition says that a state is a community of persons occupying a definite territory, independent of external control and having an organised government. All the major elements of state—population, territory, sovereignty and government—are included in this statement. State is also regarded as a social institution which has monopoly over the use of force. It has the authority to exercise control over its citizens. Like all other social institutions, the state is organised around a set of social functions. It maintains law and order and resolves various kinds of disputes through the legal system. The welfare of the people is another domain of its activities.

However, it has to be kept in view that the state is not the same as government. State as a social institution consists of a form and procedure for performing various functions. The parliamentary system of government, for example, is one way of achieving various tasks of governance.

Thus, a government is a collection of people who at any given time occupy the positions of authority within a state. In this sense, governments regularly come and go but the state remains.

The notion of welfare state is important in the context of the role of a state in social and economic reforms. A welfare state is a system in which the government assumes basic responsibility for the welfare of its citizens. The state ensures that people have access to essential resources like food, housing, health care, education, employment and so on. Thus, the question of state's action to accomplish its welfare role assumes significance. A state has to develop policies and programmes for the promotion of the common good of its citizens.

Ours is the largest democracy in the world. We have adopted a republican Constitution and a parliamentary system of government after the Independence. We also resolved to secure justice, liberty, equality and fraternity for all our citizens.

In the sections that follow we examine the role of the state in India in bringing about change through

numerous measures undertaken since the independence.

CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS

India is a Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic Republic with a parliamentary system of government. The Republic is governed in terms of the Constitution, which was adopted by the Constituent Assembly on 26 November 1949 and came into force on 26 January 1950. The Constitution of India has the distinction of being the lengthiest written constitution in the world. It contains provisions not only for the smooth democratic functioning of the governments of the Union and the States but also for ensuring equality and liberty to the citizens. There are provisions which provide channels for all-round development of the people. In this sense, the Constitution is the prime mover of social change. Some of these constitutional provisions have been discussed here to illustrate the point.

Fundamental Rights

The Constitution of India has provided some basic rights to all citizens. These are known as Fundamental Rights. These are fundamental because these are essential for civilised human existence. In the context of our Constitution these are called fundamental because these are protected by the written Constitution and cannot be altered without amending the Constitution.

There are six categories of Fundamental Rights. Articles 12 to 35

contained in Part III of the Constitution deal with these rights. These are:

(i) *Right to Equality*: According to this provision the State shall not deny to any person equality before law. It also prohibits the State from discriminating against any individual on grounds of religion, race, caste, gender or place of birth. It further provides equality of opportunity in matters of public employment. Abolition of untouchability in any form has been specified by Article 17.

(ii) *Right to Freedom*: This right consists Freedom of (a) speech and expression; (b) peaceful assembly without arms; (c) forming associations and Unions; (d) free-movement throughout the territory of India; (e) residence and settlement in any part of the country; and (f) practice of any profession, occupation, trade or business.

(iii) *Right against Exploitation*: It prohibits all forms of forced labour, child labour and traffic in human beings.

(iv) *Right to Freedom of Religion*: Every person has the right to profess, practice and propagate any religion. No person is compelled to pay taxes for the management of any particular religion. According to it, no person is allowed to impart religious instructions in state-owned educational institutions.

(v) *Cultural and Educational Rights*: Every section of citizen has the right to conserve its distinct culture, language and script. Further, all minorities whether based on religion or language have the right to establish

and administer educational institutions of their choice.

(vi) *Right to Constitutional Remedies*: Under this, every person has the right to seek justice for the enforcement of Fundamental Rights.

Directive Principles of State Policy

The Constitution lays down certain Directive Principles of State Policy. Like the Fundamental Rights, the ideals behind the Principles were rooted in our freedom struggle. Leaders of the freedom struggle strived not only for political freedom but also for social and economic upliftment of the toiling millions. These Principles were inserted in the Constitution to provide guidelines for the determination of policies and actions to be undertaken by the State after the Independence. Articles 36 to 51 of Part IV of our Constitution deal with these Principles.

The significant aspect of the Directive Principles is that "the State shall strive to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting as effectively as it may, a social order in which justice—social, economic and political—shall inform all the institutions the national life." Keeping this objective in view the State shall secure (a) adequate means of livelihood for all citizens; (b) control and distribution of wealth so as to subserve the common good; (c) equal pay for equal work; (d) health and strength for all from economic avocations, and (e) protection of child labour.

The state is expected to take steps and secure other social, economic and political programmes. Some other programmes include (a) organisation of village *panchayats*, (b) right to work and to education, (c) uniform civil code for the citizens, (d) provision for free and compulsory education, (e) promotion of educational and economic interests of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other weaker sections, and (f) separation of the judiciary from the executive.

It is, however, important to note that there is one basic difference between the Fundamental Rights and the Directive Principles of the State policy. While the violation of the former can be challenged in the court of law, the latter is not enforceable by any court. In other words, if a citizen's fundamental rights are curtailed she/he can seek justice from the court. But if the State does not undertake any programme provided for in the Directive Principles, she/he cannot move the court for its enforcement. It does not, however, mean that these Directive Principles have no value. The Constitution clearly states that Directive Principles "are, nevertheless, fundamental in the governance of the country and it shall be the duty of the State to apply these principles in making laws."

Fundamental Duties

The Constitution of India has also enumerated fundamental duties for the citizens. By the 42nd amendment of the Constitution, adopted in 1976, Article

51A was inserted in Chapter IVA of the Constitution. Accordingly, it shall be the duty of every citizen of India:

- (a) to abide by the Constitution;
- (b) to cherish and follow the noble ideas which inspired our national struggle for freedom;
- (c) to uphold and protect the sovereignty and integrity of the country;
- (d) to defend the country and render national services;
- (e) to promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India transcending religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities; to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women;
- (f) to preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture;
- (g) to protect the natural environment;
- (h) to develop the scientific temper;
- (i) to safeguard public property and to abjure violence; and
- (j) to strive towards excellence in all spheres of individual and collective activity.

We have discussed, so far, some of the general provisions in the Constitution of India having implications for social change. The Constitution also makes some special provisions for the deprived and disadvantaged groups of population such as women, children, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes and Minorities.

These special provisions essentially emanate from the basic features of our Constitution mentioned above. Let us now examine these special constitutional provisions.

Women

While Article 14 of the Constitution of India confers equal rights and opportunities for women and men in the political, economic and social spheres, Article 15 prohibits discrimination against any citizen on the grounds of gender. Article 15 (3) empowers the State to make affirmative discrimination in favour of women. Similarly, Article 39 enjoins upon the State to provide equal means of livelihood and equal pay for equal work. Article 42 directs the State to make provisions for ensuring just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief. Finally, Article 51 A imposes a Fundamental Duty on every citizen to renounce the practices derogatory to the dignity of women.

Children

Realising that children have neither a voice nor political power, the Constitution of India lays down certain special safeguards for them. As in case of women, Article 15 (3) empowers the State to make special provisions in favour of children. Article 24 prohibits employment of children below 14 years of age in any factory or mines or in other hazardous occupations. Furthermore, Article 45 provides for free and compulsory education for all children up to the age of 14 years.

Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes

We have already seen how the founding fathers of our Constitution wished to secure social, economic and political equality for all the citizens of the country. However, it was realised that this objective could not be achieved unless persons belonging to special disadvantaged groups were provided special protection to emancipate them from centuries-old prejudices and exploitation. Provisions were, therefore, incorporated in the Constitution to promote their economic, educational and social development.

It is against this background that the two types of reservations are available to the members of the backward classes under the Constitution. They are: (a) reservations of seats in the Lok Sabha, the Vidhan Sabha and the various *Panchayati Raj* bodies and (b) reservation in government services. While the reservations of seats in the Lok Sabha, the Vidhan Sabha and the *Panchayati Raj* bodies are available to the members of the SCs and STs, the provision of reservation for the OBCs is available only in the *Panchayati Raj* bodies. The second type of reservation is available to all the three categories of people.

Moreover, under Article 244(2) special provisions have been made for the tribal areas in the states of Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution.

Constitutional Safeguards for the Minorities

Under the Constitution of India, certain safeguards have been granted to the religious and linguistic minorities. Articles 29 and 30 of the Constitution seek to protect the interests of minorities. They recognise the rights of the minorities to conserve their language, script or culture. They may establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.

Article 350A provides for instructions in the mother tongue at the primary stage of education to children belonging to linguistic minorities. Article 350B provides for a Special Officer to investigate all matters relating to the safeguards for linguistic minorities.

It is evident from above that provisions of the Indian Constitution are exhaustive and they have helped to design a strong democratic polity under which equality and justice for all the citizens can be achieved. The Constitution has, thus, created an environment for ushering in an era of effective social change. It has acted not only as a facilitator of change but has also encouraged and promoted economic and social development. Moreover, it has defined and guided the strategy of planning which was adopted and fostered subsequently in the country. The constitution is the driving force effecting socio-economic reforms in the country through the process of amendment. A large number of constitutional amendments

have directed, controlled and regulated almost all activities of the society. The process of social change leading to socio-economic transformation of the Indian society was accelerated by these enactments. Some of these have influenced the life-style of the Indian people.

PLANNING AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Planning is an important factor of social change in contemporary society. It implies deliberate interventions in social policy and involves a sequential system that reveals continuity in its chain. It mirrors social objectives and helps to develop the society according to its blueprint. Planning, thus, conceives of a social order based on rationality and balanced reasoning. Such planning is possible only in democratic welfare States.

Planning in India

Planning in India was launched after the independence. The Government of India first appointed a Planning Commission with the Prime Minister of India as its Chairman in 1950 to prepare a blueprint for development taking an overall view of the needs and resources of the country. The Planning Commission evolved a system of Five-Year Plans which continues till date.

The declared goals of development policy have been to bring about rapid improvement in living standards of the people. It envisages full employment at an adequate wage and reduction of inequality arising from

the uneven distribution of income and wealth. Successive Five-Year Plans have emphasised the necessity to pursue all these objectives simultaneously. However, various Five-Year Plans have adopted different priorities keeping in view the reality of the prevailing situation.

The attainment of a high rate of growth has been a major goal of planning. It has been thought that this goal can be achieved by the coordinated efforts of both the public and private sectors of the economy. The Indian economy is characterised as a mixed economy because of the simultaneous existence of both the public and private sectors.

The public sector is a State sector, which operates in those areas which require heavy investments. These investments are mainly in basic and heavy industries. The private sector, on the other hand, covers not only organised industries but also small-scale industries, agriculture, trade and activities in housing and construction. Major banks, insurance companies, steel plants and heavy engineering corporations, railways, postal service all are public sector enterprises. The Tatas, Ambanis, Birlas, Singhanias are some of the major industrial houses in the private sector.

Though economic planning initially envisaged a growing public sector, of late, this process has slowed down considerably. The disinvestment of public shareholding in various public sector undertakings has already taken place. A privatisation drive in the

economy has gathered momentum and a debate on the issue is in the wings.

The Five-Year Plans

We have mentioned earlier that the planning strategy in India has been operating within the framework of Five-Year Plans. By now nine Five-Year Plans have been completed and the tenth Five-Year Plan (2002–2007) has just started.

The first Five-Year Plan (1951–1956) was launched when the country was recovering from trauma of the partition in 1947 and the crisis created by the Second World War. The country had to import a large amount of food grains in 1951 because of acute shortage of food grains. In view of this, the plan accorded the highest priority to agriculture including irrigation and power projects. Almost 44.6 per cent of the total plan budget were spent on agriculture. At the end of the Plan, the country's national income increased by 18 per cent and the per capita income by 11 per cent.

In the second Five-Year Plan (1956–1961) the priority shifted from agriculture to industry. It was during this plan period that a new objective was added to the economic policy. It was popularly called 'the socialistic pattern of society'. This policy stressed that the benefits of planned development should go more to the relatively under privileged sections of society. It, further, focussed on a progressive reduction in concentration of wealth and income. Jawaharlal Nehru,

the then Prime Minister of India and Chairman of the Planning Commission said in the Lok Sabha on 23 May 1956, "... broadly speaking, what do we mean when we say, socialist pattern of life? We mean a society in which there is equality of opportunity and the possibility for everyone to live a good life."

The third Five-Year Plan (1961–1966) aimed at securing progress towards self-sustaining growth. Consequently, both agriculture and industry received equal priority in this Plan. Its objectives were to achieve self-sufficiency in foodgrains and to increase agricultural production to meet the requirements of industry and export. It also aimed at expansion of basic industries like steel, chemicals, fuel and power.

The performance of the third Plan was, however, discouraging. The national income grew just by 2.6 per cent as against the target of 5 per cent. In the agricultural sector also, production suffered a setback. The situation took a serious turn and launching of the fourth Plan in March 1966 was delayed and the period between 1966–69 was often described as a period of 'Plan holiday'. This period was, however, devoted to repair the ills that had crippled the planning process.

The planning process resumed its journey in the fourth Five-Year Plan (1969–1974) with focus on economic stability. It aimed at achieving social justice with equity. The growth of both agricultural and industrial sectors was fully recognised under the

Plan but again it could not achieve its targets. Neither could it achieve self-sufficiency in foodgrains nor could it generate adequate employment opportunities. The rate of inflation became unmanageable.

Thus, the fifth Five-Year Plan (1974–1979) was formulated when the economy was under heavy inflationary pressure. The people became restive because of the burden of rising prices. Accordingly, removal of poverty and attainment of self-reliance were accepted as the core objectives of the Plan. It aimed at bringing larger sections of the poor above the poverty line. The Plan also gave top priority to bring inflation under control.

Political developments, however, ended this plan in 1978 instead of 1979 and the sixth Plan was started as the 'rolling plan'. Thus, the sixth Five-Year Plan (1980–1985) was finalised after taking into account the achievements and shortcomings of the past three decades of planning. While removal of poverty remained the core objective of the Plan, emphasis was also laid on economic growth and elimination of unemployment. This Plan achieved considerable success. Official statistics show that the proportion of people living below the poverty line declined from 48.3 per cent in 1977–1978 to 36.9 per cent in 1984–1985.

The seventh Plan (1985–1990) emphasised programmes for rapid growth in foodgrain production, increased employment opportunities and productivity. In order to reduce unemployment, special programmes

like *Jawahar Rozgar Yojana* were launched. During this Plan period, the Gross Domestic Product grew at an average rate of 5.8 per cent exceeding the targeted growth rate by 0.8 per cent.

The eighth Five-Year Plan (1990–95) could not take off due to the changing political scenario at the level of Central Government. Therefore, it was decided that the eighth Five-Year Plan would commence on 1 April 1992 and 1990–91 and 1991–1992 should be treated as separate Annual Plans. Thus, the eighth Five-Year Plan (1992–1997) was launched in the context of new economic reforms which were introduced in the country. The Plan was oriented towards employment generation. More investments were made in small industries, as they were job-intensive. The Plan aimed at an average annual growth rate of 5.6 per cent and an average industrial growth rate of about 7.5 per cent. The economic performance of this Plan was encouraging and the country achieved rapid economic growth.

We have just completed the ninth Five-Year Plan (1997–2002). It was launched in the fiftieth year of India's Independence. Some of the major objectives of the ninth Plan were: (i) priority to agriculture and rural development with a view to generating adequate productive employment and eradication of poverty, (ii) accelerating the growth rate of the economy with stable prices, (iii) ensuring food and nutritional security for all, (iv) providing basic minimum services of safe drinking water, primary health care facilities,

universal primary education, shelter, and connectivity to all in a time-bound manner, (v) containing the growth rate of population; and (vi) empowerment of women and socially disadvantaged groups such as Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes and Minorities as agents of socio-economic change and development.

The ninth Plan envisaged an average growth rate of 6.5 per cent per annum in GDP as against the growth rate of 7 per cent approved initially in the draft proposal. The reduction in the target was necessitated by the changes in the national as well as global economic situation in the first two years of the ninth Plan.

In the last fifty years (1950 – 1951 to 2000 – 2001) since India became a Republic, the national income has increased 7.6 times implying a compound growth rate of 4.2 per cent per annum. The per capita income has increased 2.75 times from Rs. 3,718 to Rs. 10,654 (at 1993–94 prices) registering a compound growth rate of 2.1 per cent.

It is clear from the preceding discussion that planning in India has covered a long journey of five decades and is still going strong. Nonetheless, it has had mixed results. While it achieved substantial gains in agricultural sector, the success has not been so remarkable in generating employment opportunities. The rate of industrial growth has been moderate in core sector but the small-scale industries have suffered

serious setbacks. The uneven achievements in social sector like education and health are visible even to a casual observer. While we have made considerable progress in literacy, we cannot say so about health. Female literacy, for example, has been steadily improving over the years, from 39 per cent in 1991 to 54 per cent in 2001. However, even today 193 million women are illiterate in India. The national policy for women has evolved from 'welfare' to 'development' to 'empowerment'.

Another area of notable performance has been in providing social justice to and empowerment of the marginalised sections of the society. You know that the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes and Minorities are the major disadvantaged groups in India. These groups have been identified as target groups. Special programmes have been implemented for their overall development. The Special Component Plan for Scheduled Castes, for instance, is designed to channelise the flow of benefits from the general sectors in Five-Year Plans for the development of SCs. Similarly, the Tribal Sub-Plan is a plan within a State Plan meant for welfare and development of tribals. Measures for the educational and economic development of minorities have also been initiated. Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains and Zoroastrians (Parsis) have been notified as minorities as per the provision under the National Commission of Minorities Act, 1992. The National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation

has been set up for providing concessional finance to eligible beneficiaries belonging to minority communities for setting up self-employment ventures.

It is apparent that state intervention through several measures has brought far-reaching changes in the life of the

people. Changes are visible not only in their economic condition but also in their social and cultural life. The democratic political system has created a new social order that is committed to eliminate inequality of status and discriminatory treatment. State, thus, acts as a strong agent of social change.

GLOSSARY

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT. When women become conscious for their rights and begin to assert.

PRIVATE SECTORS. That part of the economy in which production activities are carried on by private enterprises. A private enterprise is that which is owned and operated by an individual or group of individuals.

PUBLIC SECTORS. This includes central, state and local governments and all the enterprises owned and operated by them.

MIXED ECONOMY. A market economy in which both private and public enterprises participate in production.

PRIVATISATION. In general, it is the sale of government-owned enterprises to individuals or group of individuals with or without loss of government control in these enterprises.

LIBERALISATION. This contains two things viz. (a) allowing the private enterprises to engage in production activities which were earlier restricted to government enterprises and (b) relaxing the rules and regulation meant for private enterprises. This also includes permitting the enterprises run by foreign nationals.

EXERCISE

1. What is a welfare State?
2. List our fundamental rights.
3. Highlight some of our Directive Principles of the State Policy.
4. List any five fundamental duties.
5. Explain the important goals of the planning in India.
6. What are the Constitutional safeguards for women and children?

7. List the objectives of the ninth Five-Year Plan in India.
8. Critically examine the achievements of Five-Year Plans in India.

SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Dubey, S.C.(ed.), *India Since Independence : Social Report on India 1947-1972*, Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi, 1977.
2. Desai, A.R., *State and Society in India : Essays in Dissent*, Popular Prakashan, Mumbai, 1975.
3. Kothari, Rajni, *Politics in India*, Orient Longman, New Delhi, 1970.
4. Oommen, T.K, (ed.), *Citizenship and National Identity: From Colonisation to Globalisation*, Sage Publications, New Delhi, 1997.
5. Mahajan, Gurpreet, (ed.), *Democracy, Difference and Social Justice*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1998.

CHAPTER 4

Legislation and Democratic Decentralisation

UNDERSTANDING LAW AND LEGISLATION

There is a reciprocal relationship between law and social change. Law is both an effect and cause of social change. In this chapter we shall consider law as a strategy for social change.

In its broadest sense, law includes all patterns of socially expected rule enforcement. In this sense, it covers all customs or rules whose observance is required and enforced by a recognised authority. However, for sociological purposes it is better to limit the term law to formally enacted and recorded norms. Though there is no exact demarcation between law and norms that are found in a society, a distinction has to be made between laws on the one hand and norms on the other. In the present discussion we shall use law in the sense of rules of action established by a legitimate authority.

Laws are enacted by legislatures. They are always written and recorded in some manner. They are interpreted by courts and enforced by administrative agencies like police. For example, the nature of punishment and

the procedures for giving such punishments for theft or robbery are all mentioned in law books.

Broadly speaking, there are two categories of law—criminal law and Civil law. Criminal laws prohibit actions disruptive to society such as theft, murder or fraud. Civil laws, on the other hand, regulate the rights of individuals such as resolving property disputes. Civil law takes many forms depending upon the nature of social life involved. They may be commercial, constitutional and family laws.

The law-making system in every society produces legislations concerning various aspects of life. Legislation may be of different types. Some of them are framed to maintain law and order in society. Such legislations act as a mechanism of social control to maintain social stability. In contrast, some legislation are applied to remove social evils and change the conservative faiths and beliefs. The term social legislation is used to depict these legislations. Social legislations play a dynamic role in society. They are effective instruments of social change.

Law and Social Change

History is full of examples where laws have been used to bring about changes in society. Laws have been created to achieve desired goals. It is not only articulates but also sets the course for major social changes. In fact, attempted social change through law is an important feature of the modern world. This is visible in almost all developed and developing societies. The changes that have occurred with the transformation of Western capitalist societies and the emergence of Soviet-type societies have essentially been through laws. The Soviet Union and several east European countries, for example, have successfully made large-scale social changes through laws. Income redistribution, nationalisation of industries, land reforms and provision of free education are examples of the effectiveness of law to initiate change.

Nonetheless, a distinction is made between direct and indirect aspects of law in social change. In many cases law interacts directly with social institutions and brings about obvious changes. For instance, a law prohibiting polygamy has a direct influence on society. It alters the behaviour of individuals. On the other hand, laws play an indirect role also by shaping various social institutions which in turn have a direct impact on society. The most appropriate example is the system of compulsory education which enables the functioning of educational institutions, which in turn leads to

social change. However, such a distinction is not absolute but a relative one. Sometimes, emphasis is on the direct aspect and less on the indirect impact of social change, while in other cases the opposite may be true.

There is another way of examining the role of law in social change. Law redefines the normative order and creates the possibility of new forms of social institutions. It provides formal facilities and extends rights to individuals. In India, for example, law against untouchability has not only prohibited the inhuman practice but has also given formal rights to those who suffered from such disabilities to protest against it. In this sense, law not only codifies certain customs and morals, but also modifies the behaviour and values existing in a particular society. Thus, law entails two interrelated processes: the institutionalisation and the internalisation of patterns of behaviour. Institutionalisation of a pattern of behaviour means the creation of norms with provisions for its enforcement. Internalisation of pattern of behaviour, on the other hand, means the incorporation and acceptance of values implicit in a law. When the institutionalisation process is successful, it in turn facilitates the internalisation of attitudes and beliefs.

Legal System in India

Historically, no universalistic legal system based on the principle of equality existed in ancient India. In ancient India there was a close

connection between law and religion. A rule of law was not different from a rule of religion. It was maintained that all laws were contained in the *Dharmshastras*. The legal system was primarily based on the social position of castes and classes. No uniform standards were applied in providing justice to people. There was no uniform legal norm at an all-India level. Local customs and regional practices defined and determined these norms. Another important feature of the ancient legal system was its orientation towards the group. Legal norms applied more to the group as a unit rather than to the individual. This characteristic of legal system continued even during the medieval period.

It was only during the British rule that radical transformation took place in the legal and judicial systems of the country. The British introduced numerous changes in the traditional legal system. The new legal system was based on the principle of universalism. The notion of equality before law was recognised and received legal sanction. Law courts were established at different levels. The enactment of the Indian Penal Code and the Codes of Civil and Criminal Procedure produced a strong system of judicial administration. This legal system was, however, not confined to criminal justice alone. It even brought domestic and personal life of the people under its purview. Several social legislations came into operation which covered areas like collective bargaining, social security and employment contract. A continuous

rationalisation of law was introduced by codification of customary law. It increased the separation of law from religion.

Moreover, some legislation in relation to prevailing conservative and orthodox social practices were also passed during the colonial period which acted towards social reform. Indian society in the nineteenth century was under the grip of inhuman customs and practices. Untouchability was practised throughout the country. The position of women was most degrading. Child marriage, widowhood and the cruel practice of *sati* put women to life-long misery and humiliation. These inhuman practices were, however, challenged by social reformers and the British Indian Government responded by enacting several social legislations.

The practice of *sati* (widow burning) was declared illegal in 1829. The Hindu Widow Remarriage Act of 1856 legalised the remarriage of the Hindu widows. When the members of the *Brahmo Samaj* in Bengal started facing problem in marriage, a Native Marriage Act was passed in 1872. The Brahmos claimed that they did not belong to any religious groups in India. This Act worked like a civil marriage law under which people outside any religious fold could marry. Another important legislation linked with marriage was the Age of Consent Act of 1891. The Act prohibited the performance of marriage for girls below the age of twelve. During the closing years of the nineteenth century, besides personal laws, several other laws relating to land and industry were also enacted.

The Factory Act of 1881 addressed the issue of the welfare of factory workers. The Bengal Tenancy Act of 1885 introduced reforms in land tenure system. Similarly, the Press Act of 1878 was a landmark in the field of mass communication. These legislations not only advanced the cause of cultural change but also contributed towards transformation of the agrarian structure.

Social Legislation in Post-Independent India

The nature and extent of social change in India has been influenced largely by radical social legislation introduced after the Independence. They pertain to subjects ranging from economy, polity, trade and commerce to marriage, family and inheritance. Legislations impact upon every aspect of people's lives. The number of legislation enacted after the independence is, however, so large that all of them cannot be discussed here. Therefore, we have selected only some important legislation to highlight their role in social change.

Laws have been passed to eradicate social evils. Under Article 17 of the Indian Constitution, untouchability is prohibited and its practice in any form is made punishable. A comprehensive legislation called the Untouchability (Offences) Act, 1955 was passed later. This Act was further amended as the Protection of Civil Rights Act in 1976. According to this Act, an untouchable (Scheduled Caste) has access to all

public places including places of worship. Though this legislation has not been fully able to eradicate the practice of untouchability, it has definitely attacked caste prejudice.

Similarly, a number of laws have been enacted for the upliftment of women and children. These Acts have brought about a perceptible improvement in their position in society. The Special Marriage Act of 1954, the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955, the Hindu Succession Act of 1956 and the Dowry Prohibition Act of 1961 have initiated changes in the very structure of Hindu society. Most of these legislations have further been amended to accommodate more radical and relevant issues. For example, the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 was amended in 1976 to provide the right to a girl to deny marriage before attaining puberty. In fact the original Act itself was radical because it enforced monogamy and permitted divorce among the Hindus. The Dowry Prohibition Act of 1961 was also amended in 1984 that made cruelty towards women a cognisable offence. The socio-economic changes that have been brought about through legislations have created a favourable situation regarding the status of women.

A number of legislations have also been passed to safeguard and protect the rights of children. Some of them are the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956, the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986, the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and

Full Participation) Act, 1996, the Juvenile Justice Act, 2000 and so on.

The role of legislation in transforming the socio-economic condition of tribals is even more explicit. We may throw light on this issue by citing the example of north-eastern India, which is home to a large number of tribals. The tribal communities of this region have experienced remarkable changes in their traditional economy, cultural life and political systems. The safeguards provided to tribals in the states of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India have facilitated numerous programmes for administration and development. Special provisions under Article 371A of the Constitution have been made for the State of Nagaland to safeguard the cultural identity of the Nagas. The State Governments have passed several legislations which have ushered changes along with preserving their identity. The Autonomous District Councils established under the provisions of the Sixth Schedule have been given wide power to maintain control over the tribal land. The Land Transfer Act of 1971 passed by the Meghalaya State Legislature has almost stopped the process of land alienation. Likewise, the Lushai Hills District (Acquisition of Chief's Rights) Act, 1954 abolished the age-old system of chieftainship among the Mizos as the people themselves demanded it. What we have attempted to illustrate here is that, in a democratic state like ours,

legislation can be effectively used as an instrument of social change.

DEMOCRATIC DECENTRALISATION

The question of division of power among institutions and individuals has been a matter of considerable debate among the people involved in governance. This need has been specially emphasised as democracy as a form of government has gained acceptance in the modern world. Decentralisation means sharing of decision making authority with the lower levels in institutions and organisations. It is called democratic as this sharing is based on the basic principle of democracy and democratisation. There are different forms of decentralisation — political, administrative and financial.

It is argued that decentralisation is essential for the functioning of a democratic system at different levels. It helps to empower social groups which traditionally have been weak and deprived. Decentralisation is particularly necessary for a country like ours which is large in size and complex in socio-cultural settings. Diversity exists in India in terms of religion, language, culture and economy. Thus, the geographical and social complexities require decentralisation for the purposes of planning and administration.

The need for decentralisation in India has long been realised and attempts have been made to achieve it. Decentralisation became, particularly,

important after Independence to achieve goals of democracy and development.

In the section that follows we will discuss the *Panchayati Raj* institutions as forms and institutional schemes for achieving democratic decentralisation.

PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTIONS

Background

The history of *panchayat* in India goes back to hundreds of years. The term *panch* is ordinarily used for a group of persons (*panch* = five) who take decisions on collective affairs of the village. The people repose so much confidence in *panch* that they are called *panch Parmeshwar* (God speaks through the five). The system of taking collective decision through *panch* is known as *panchayat*. It is, largely, a self-governing institution.

The growth of *panchayat* in India as a self-governing institution has not been steady in the course of its long history. However, the ideals of *panchayat* were revived when Mahatma Gandhi arrived on the national political scene. Gandhiji asserted that the village panchayats would now be a living force in a special way, and India would almost be enjoying self-government suited to its requirements. Accordingly, the idea of *panchayat* as a system of local government remained an important issue in India's freedom struggle. But when the country became independent the *panchayat* of Gandhi's vision did not acquire a central place in

the Indian Constitution. It was merely included in Article 40 under the Directive Principles of the State Policy. Article 40 says, "the State shall take steps to organise village panchayats and endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of local self-government."

Nonetheless, it is interesting to point out that, although the Directive Principles of the Constitution are only suggestive in nature, the significance of *Panchayati Raj* institutions was recognised by all States. Immediately after the Independence an ambitious development programme for rural areas was launched. The programme, known as the Community Development Programme (CDP), covered almost all activities of rural development. But it could not fully achieve its goals. In order to review the causes of its limited success, the Government of India appointed a Study Team. It was headed by Balwantrai Mehta, the then Member of Parliament. The Study Team came to the conclusion that the CDP had failed to achieve its targets because of the absence of the people's participation in the programme. In view of this, it recommended the creation of certain institutions based on the principle of democratic decentralisation for facilitating people's participation in development programmes. The formation of three-tier *Panchayati Raj* institutions in the country was the result of the above recommendations. All the States in India passed Panchayat Acts by 1959.

Accordingly, panchayats were established at village (Village Panchayat), block (Panchayat Samiti) and District (Zila Parishad) levels. Another committee, popularly called the Ashok Mehta Committee, also reviewed the functioning of the Panchayati Raj structure. This Committee proposed a two-tier system for grass-root governance. But the Government did not accept this recommendation and we continued to follow the three-tier system proposed by the Balwantrai Mehta Committee report.

This set up of panchayats continued for almost more than two decades. Though the basic objectives of these institutions were uniform in various states but their powers, functions and modes of elections differed considerably. Under these circumstances, the performance of these institutions widely varied from State to State. In some States, they effectively contributed to development activities, but in other States panchayats they merely generated conflicts and rivalries among various caste groups for controlling power in these institutions. Panchayati Raj institutions failed in benefiting the weaker sections of rural society.

Moreover, the organisational structure of these institutions remained very weak. In the absence of any legal binding, no regular elections to panchayats were held. No financial power was given to these panchayati bodies. Government officials continued to maintain wide-ranging command

over panchayat representatives. Such bureaucratic control killed initiative and interests of the people in the Panchayati Raj structures. The stagnation and decline of Panchayati Raj institutions continued till the early nineties when steps were undertaken to revitalise them.

Recent Efforts

As stated before, except a marginal reference in the Directive Principles of the State Policy, panchayat had no constitutional status. But the position radically changed in 1993, when the 73rd Amendment to the Constitution was passed in the Parliament and received the assent of the President of India. The Amendment is based on the principle of 'power to the people' and provides constitutional guarantee to panchayats. The salient features of the Act are given below:

- (a) It recognises panchayats as 'institutions of self-government'.
- (b) It entrusts panchayats the powers and responsibilities to prepare a plan for economic development and social justice.
- (c) It provides for the establishment of uniform three-tier system of strong panchayats at village, intermediate (block/taluka) and district levels for all states having a population of over twenty lakh.
- (d) It gives guidelines for the structure, powers and functions, finance and elections, and

reservations of seats for the weaker sections at various levels of panchayats.

The Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act has been hailed as a revolutionary step towards establishing grass-root democracy. The blueprint provided by the Amendment has now become a reality. All the states have passed legislation in conformity with the provisions of the Amendment. Thus, for the first time in the history of *Panchayati Raj* system, a high degree of uniformity has been achieved on panchayats.

Another Act has been passed for the tribal areas of some States. The provisions of the *Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act*, 1996 extends panchayats to the tribal areas of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Rajasthan. This has come into effect on 24 December 1996. All states have passed laws to give effect to the provisions contained in the Act 40 of 1996.

Against the above background we now move on to discuss various aspects of *Panchayati Raj* Institutions in terms of structure, composition, power and function.

Structure and Composition

Panchayats are constituted at the village, intermediate and district levels. The term intermediate has been used for Community Development Block or *taluka* because it exists between a

village and a district. However, panchayats at the intermediate level may not be constituted if the population of a state does not exceed twenty lakh.

Gram Sabha is a body consisting of all persons registered in the electoral rolls to a village comprised within the area of *Gram Panchayat*. *Gram Sabha* is regarded as the soul of *Panchayati Raj*. Since all the registered voters of a village Panchayat are included in a *Gram Sabha*, it acts as a general body of the village *panchayat*. It provides a forum for the people to ensure transparency and accountability in the system. All-State *Panchayat Acts* have provision for the constitution of *Gram Sabha*. The *Sabha* has to meet at least once in six months.

All the seats in a *panchayat* are filled by persons chosen by direct election from territorial constituencies in the *panchayat* area. Each *panchayat* area is divided into territorial constituencies for this purpose.

The Chairperson of a *panchayat* at the village level is elected ordinarily by the voters of the concerned *panchayat*. But the Chairperson of *panchayat* at the intermediate level or a district level is elected by and from amongst the elected members.

Reservation of Seats

In every *panchayat* seats are reserved for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes in proportion to their population in the *panchayat* area. Depending upon the

decision of a State, provision for reservation of seats may be provided in favour of the Other Backward Classes of citizens.

Not less than one-third of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election is reserved for women. This includes seats reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.

The posts of the Chairperson in Panchayats at the different levels are also reserved for the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and women. The number of such reserved posts for the first two categories depends on their population. But in the case of women the number of reserved posts of Chairpersons has to be not less than one-third of the total number of posts at each level.

Finally, the State has also been given power to make any provision for reservation of seats and posts at any level for the Other Backward Classes.

Duration of Panchayats

Every Panchayat shall have the duration of five years from the date of its first meeting. An election to constitute a Panchayat has to be held before the expiry of its duration.

However, the State government has been given power to dissolve a Panchayat even before its duration of five years. But in such a case an election to constitute a Panchayat has to be completed before a period of six months from the date of its dissolution.

Powers and Responsibilities of Panchayats

Panchayats have been given power and authority to enable them to function as institutions of self-government. There are two major areas which have been identified for this purpose. They are:

- (a) the preparation of plans for economic development and social justice; and
- (b) the implementation of schemes for economic development and social justice.

The Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution has listed some subjects concerning the above schemes that may be undertaken by panchayats at different levels. Some major subjects are:

1. Agriculture
2. Land improvement, implementation of land reforms, land consolidation
3. Minor irrigation, watershed development
4. Animal husbandry
5. Fisheries
6. Social forestry
7. Small scale industries
8. Khadi, village and cottage industries
9. Drinking water
10. Rural housing
11. Roads, culverts, bridges etc
12. Rural electrification
13. Poverty alleviation programmes
14. Education including primary and secondary schools
15. Cultural activities
16. Health and sanitation.

Other Major Constitutional Provisions

In addition to the above provisions, the Constitution has made some other provisions to strengthen *Panchayati Raj* institutions.

- (a) *Panchayats* have been authorised to levy, collect and appropriate taxes and fees.
- (b) A Finance Commission has to be constituted by every state to review the financial position of the *panchayats*.
- (c) A State Election Commission consisting of a State Election Commissioner has to be appointed in every state. It will conduct all elections to the *panchayats*.

Panchayats in Urban Areas

A provision has also been made to constitute *panchayat* in some urban areas. In order to provide a common framework for urban local bodies as effective democratic unit of self-government, Parliament enacted the Constitution (74th Amendment) Act, in 1992 relating to municipalities. The Act received the assent of the President on 20 April 1993. The Act provides constitution of three types of Municipalities:

- (a) Nagar Panchayats for areas in transition from a rural area to urban area,
- (b) Municipal Councils for smaller urban areas, and
- (c) Municipal Corporation for large urban areas.

Like rural panchayats, the Act has made provisions for making these bodies effective and strong. These provisions include fixed duration of municipalities, appointment of State Election Commission, appointment of State Finance Commission and constitution of metropolitan and district planning committees. All the States have implemented these provisions.

Our discussion so far clearly suggests that the *Panchayati Raj* Institutions (PRIs) have assumed an important place in our democratic political structure. They are playing a significant role in achieving democratic decentralisation. The pace of socio-economic development in the rural areas and the level of people's participation in these affairs has increased. All this has made us realise the process of self-governance at the grass-root level through this system.

The access of weaker sections to rural decision making has been legally ensured. It has enlarged the social base of the *Panchayati Raj*. The reservation has sought to empower women to highlight their grievances. In fact, reservation has made panchayats more representative of the village community. Reservation, of course, does not automatically create equality but it gives these sections a share of participation.

Social change occurs only when all sections of society actively participate in the decision making process of it.

GLOSSARY

CIVIL LAW. Laws that regulate relation between two individuals.

CRIMINAL LAW. Laws that prohibit actions disruptive to the society.

INDIAN PENAL CODE. A statute book which defines offences and their punishments. It is in operation since 1860 in India and has been amended from time to time.

JUVENILE OR CHILD. A person who has not completed eighteen years of age.

EXERCISE

1. What is meant by 'Law'?
2. Distinguish between civil law and criminal law.
3. Discuss the role of social legislation in bringing about social change.
4. What is meant by *Panchayati Raj*?
5. What are the salient features of the 73rd amendment to the Constitution?
6. List the important subjects under the *Panchayat*.
7. How far has the *Panchayati Raj* institutions been successful in bringing about social change in India?

SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Galanter, Marc, *Law and Society in Modern India*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1997.
2. Jha, S.N. & Mathur, P.C., *Decentralisation and Local Politics*, Sage Publications, New Delhi, 1999.

CHAPTER 5

Economic Development and Social Change

We know that the social world is made up of many aspects—economic, political, religious, educational and so on. All these aspects can be analysed independently of each other but they also influence one another. In this sense, economic aspect of social life cannot be ignored while discussing social change.

All human beings have economic problems. As individuals how we earn our living is the most important fact of life. Similarly, the most significant fact of any society is how its members produce and distribute their food. Accordingly, economic production is the basic activity of a society, and it plays a determining role in shaping its social structure.

India is a land of villages. There are more than six lakh villages in our country. Agriculture continues to be the primary economic activity of the people. Land is, therefore, the basic means of production in the countryside. In this way, we can say that economic development in India depends essentially on its agricultural development. Against this background, we shall now examine some crucial aspects of agrarian structure and social change.

LAND REFORMS

Agrarian structure forms a critical aspect of any discussion on socio-economic development in India. The issues of economic backwardness and rural tension are all involved in the basic nature of an agrarian society. Land continues to be the mainstay of the people. It constitutes not only the structural feature of rural areas but changes in land relations act as significant indicator of social and economic change.

Concept of Land Reform

The term land reform has been used both in a narrow and in a broad sense. In the narrow and generally accepted sense, land reform means redistribution of rights in land for the benefit of small farmers and landless people. This concept of land reform refers to its simplest element commonly found in all land reform policies. On the other hand, in a broad sense land reform is understood to mean any improvement in the institutions of land system and agricultural organisation. This understanding of land reform suggests that land reform measures

should go not only for redistribution of land but also undertake other measures to improve conditions of agriculture. The United Nations has accepted this notion of land reform. The UN definition says that the ideal land reform programme is an integrated programme of measures designed to eliminate obstacles to economic and social development arising out of defects in the agrarian structure.

In the present context also, by land reforms we mean all those measures which have been undertaken in India by the government to remove structural obstacles in the agrarian system.

Objectives of Land Reforms

There are no universal motives behind land reforms but some common objectives may be found everywhere.

Social justice and economic equality are the major objectives behind land reforms. The ideal of equality has become part of people's consciousness in the modern world. Particularly in a traditional hierarchical society, the idea of equality has emerged as a revolutionary force. It also subsumes the elimination of the worst forms of discrimination and poverty. The ideology of equality and social justice has been expressed in terms of programmes like land reforms and poverty alleviation.

Secondly, nationalism has been another motivation behind land reforms. Most of the developing

countries in the world gained independence mainly after the Second World War. Thus, the achievement of national independence has been associated with the removal of institutional structures created during the colonial rule. Such structures may include the ownership of large estates by persons of alien nationality or various forms of land tenures imposed under the colonial rule. The abolition of *Zamindari* in India is an outstanding example. *Zamindari*, a form of land settlement established during the British rule was a symbol of colonial exploitation. Naturally, it was always a target for the leaders of India's freedom struggle. Accordingly, its abolition became the goal of the first phase of land reform measures after independence. We shall talk about it in detail a little later.

Thirdly, the urge for democracy in contemporary world is another factor behind land reform programmes. The idea of democracy has become a moving force in political power. The goal of liberty and justice can be achieved only in a democratic society. In this manner, even the poor and the deprived express their grievances and articulate their demands in a democratic way. Thus an environment for reforms is created.

Finally, land reform is taken as a means to increase productivity of land. It is thus considered one of the key issues in economic development in agricultural societies. It has been adopted as a central programme for agricultural development.

The basic issues of agrarian reorganisation are resolved through effective implementation of land reform measures.

Land Reforms in India

Land reforms in India got underway both in political factors as well as in organisational mobilisation of peasantry. The political factors were associated first with British rule and later with the growth of nationalism. It created a situation in which undertaking land reform measures became a compulsion for the government. Thus, some agrarian legislations which attempt to protect the rights of tenants date back to the middle of the nineteenth century.

The poverty of the people and extreme exploitation of the peasantry by *zamindars* and moneylenders attracted the attention of political leaders during the freedom struggle. It became an important plank of the programme of the Indian National Congress. A major programme of agrarian reform was presented in 1936 at Jawaharlal Nehru's initiative and Mahatma Gandhi's approval. In his presidential address at Faizpur Session of the Congress, Nehru asked for "the removal of intermediaries between the cultivator and State" after which "cooperative or collective farming must follow."

Almost around the same time, pressure was being created by the increasing number of peasant struggles in different parts of the

country. The All India *Kisan Sabha* in its meeting at Lucknow in 1936 demanded the abolition of *Zamindari*, occupancy rights for tenants, redistribution of cultivable waste land to landless labourers and others. In fact, between 1920 and 1946 several peasant organisations emerged which expressed the grievances of the middle and poor peasants. The *Kisan Sabha* Movement led by Swami Sahajanand Saraswati, the *Kheda* Agitation of 1918, the *Bardoli Satyagrah* of 1928, and the *Tebhaga* Movement of 194-47 in Bengal were some of the major peasant struggles of the pre-Independence days. Agrarian discontent and injustice had spread throughout the country. These grievances were expressed in widespread conflicts between peasants and landlords. But if seen in the context of their goals, these peasant struggles produced positive results. The pressure created by the long drawn struggles compelled the Government to work out plans for the redressal of the complaints of peasants. In this sense, peasant movements before the independence assumed historical importance for the land reform programmes that began just after the independence.

Land Reforms after the Independence

Shortly after the independence ample emphasis was put on land reforms as part of the national policy to transform iniquitous agrarian structure. The strategy adopted was to introduce land

reforms through land legislation. It was broadly indicated by the Government of India and enacted by the state legislatures:

The primary objectives of land reforms were:

- (a) to remove motivational and other impediments which arise from the agrarian structure inherited from the past, and
- (b) to eliminate all elements of exploitation and social injustice within the agrarian system so as to ensure equality of status and opportunity to all sections of the population.

It is obvious from these objectives that land reforms were introduced with a view to modernise agriculture and reduce inequalities in the agrarian economy. These objectives were converted into the following programmes of action:

- (a) the abolition of all forms of intermediaries between the state and the tiller of the soil,
- (b) conferment of ownership rights on the cultivating tenants in the land held under their possession,
- (c) imposition of ceiling on agricultural land holdings,
- (d) consolidation of holdings with a view to making easier the application of modern techniques of agriculture, and;
- (e) rationalisation of the record of rights in land.

Let us now turn to these programmes in some detail:

(a) Abolition of Intermediaries

The British rulers introduced three major forms of land settlements—*Zamindari*, *Ratyatwari* and *Mahalwari*—to gain maximum revenue from land. Under the *Zamindari* system the rights of property in land were given to the local rentgatherers. These persons were called *Zamindars* and belonged generally to the upper castes of the community. This new settlement turned the actual cultivators into tenants. This structural change in the land system created a class of intermediary between the State and the actual tillers of the soil. Under the *Ratyatwari* system, no intermediary owners were recognised. The actual tillers of the soil were given transferable rights in their lands. But under this system also influential *Ratyats* emerged as powerful landholders. In the *Mahalwari* settlement, too, a class of intermediaries had emerged.

These intermediaries had no interest in land management and improvement. Moreover, while the *Zamindars* were required to pay a fixed amount of revenue to the Government, there was no limit on collections from the actual cultivators. Numerous illegal cesses were imposed from time to time. The *Zamindari* system allowed a high level of absenteeism. Thus, the system was not only unjust but it was also characterised by acute economic exploitation and social oppression.

It was against this background that abolition of intermediary interests became the first target of land reforms during the early years of the

Date .

Independence. This measure, undertaken all over the country, essentially sought removal of all intermediaries like *Zamindari*, *Jagirdari*, *Mirasdari* and others. It brought cultivators into direct relationship with the State. It conferred permanent rights in land to these actual cultivators. Accordingly, by 1954-55 almost all States abolished intermediary tenures through several land reform legislations. The abolition of intermediary tenures represents a remarkable transition to a modern agrarian structure.

(b) Tenancy Reforms

Use and occupancy of land of another person on a rental basis is known as tenancy. Tenancy in land has been a widespread practice in different parts of the country. Different forms of tenancy such as the share cropping system, the fixed-kind produce system, the fixed-cash practice have existed both in the *Zamindari* and *Raiyatwari* settled areas. Under the system, the small farmers and landless people lease-in land for cultivation from rich landowners. These landless cultivators pay rent in kind (produce) or cash to the landowners in return for land. They are known as tenants (local names are: *Adhikars* in Assam, *Bargadars* in West Bengal, *Bataidars* in Bihar, *Waramadars* in Tamil Nadu, *Kamins* in Punjab etc.). These tenants have weak socio-economic position and lack security and protection. They may be evicted any time by the landowners. Thus, they have been

tenants-at-w
purposes.

Practical

In view of large scale prevalence of tenancy, reforms were introduced to rationalise the rights and obligations of various classes of tenants. Tenancy reforms laid emphasis on three major aspects of the problem:

1. regulation of rent,
2. security of tenure; and
3. right of purchase for the tenants.

These steps have been taken to improve the condition of cultivating tenants. They have been protected against rack-renting through the regulation of rent. Security of tenure for tenants has regulated eviction from land by the landowners. The tenants have also been conferred ownership rights over the lands cultivated by them as tenants. Over 124.22 lakh tenants have got their rights protected over an area of 156.30 lakh acres till September 2000.

(c) Ceiling on Landholdings

The basic objective of fixation of ceiling on landholdings is to acquire land above a certain level from the present landholders for its distribution among the landless. It is primarily a redistributive measure based on the principle of socio-economic justice. The disparity in landownership in India is a well-known fact. While nearly one fourth of rural households have no land at all, there were a large number of landholders owning thousands of acres each on the eve of independence. Thus, fixation of ceiling on agricultural

holdings has been used as a means to correct this imbalance.

Legislations imposing ceiling on landholdings formed the second phase of land reform package in the independent India. This process began during the Second Five Year Plan in most states. Almost all the states have legislations restricting the size of holdings which a person or family can own. However, the permissible size varies according to the quality of land. Acquisition of land in excess of the ceiling is prohibited. Land rendered surplus to the ceiling is taken over by the state and distributed among the weaker sections of the community.

Though land ceiling laws have been passed within the broader framework suggested by the Central Government, there are differences among various state laws. In all the Acts there are a variety of exemptions from the ceiling. The ceilings fixed are also different. While in most states, the ceilings fixed are very high, in others ample scope is left for manipulation by the landowners. The process of taking possession of surplus land and its distribution among the landless is, rather slow.

The total quantum of land declared surplus in the entire country since inception till September 2000 is 73.49 lakh acres. Out of this, only about 64.84 lakh acres have been taken possession of and 52.99 lakh are have been distributed. The total number of beneficiaries of this scheme in the country is 55.10 lakh, of whom 36 per cent belong to the Scheduled

Castes and 15 per cent to the Scheduled Tribes.

(d) Consolidation of Holdings

The fragmentation of landholdings has been an important impediment in agricultural development. Most holdings are not only small but also widely scattered. Thus, legislative measures for consolidation of holdings have been undertaken in most of the states. Major focus has been on the consolidation of the land of a holder at one or two places for enabling them to make better use of resources. Attempts have also been made to take measures for consolidation in the command areas of major irrigation projects.

(e) Land Records

The record of rights in land has been faulty and unsatisfactory. The availability of correct and up-to-date records has always been a problem. It is in view of this that updating of land records has now been made a part of land reform measures.

However, progress in this respect has been poor. The Five Year Plan documents say that "in several States, record of right do not provide information regarding tenants, sub-tenants and crop-sharers...." It has further been highlighted that large areas of the country still do not have up-to-date land records. The main reason behind this has been the strong opposition of big landowners.

Nonetheless several states have initiated the process of updating the

land records through revisional surveys and settlements. Steps have also been taken to computerise these records. A centrally sponsored Scheme on Computerisation of Land Records has been launched with a view to remove the problems inherent in the manual system of maintenance and updating of land records.

GREEN REVOLUTION

The fundamental change and phenomenal increase in foodgrains production in late sixties in India has earned the name of 'Green Revolution'. The word 'green' here refers to green fields of the countryside and 'revolution' indicates a substantial change.

The availability of adequate foodgrains has been a serious problem in the country till recently. Foodgrains had to be imported from the developed countries to feed the vast population. Shortage of food was mainly caused by low productivity of land, over-dependence on monsoon and the outmoded agrarian structure. Under these conditions, achieving self-sufficiency in foodgrains became the top priority of our national efforts. We have already seen how various schemes under the five year plans, land reforms and community development programmes have all been directed towards achieving this goal. However, these efforts could not initially succeed in increasing agricultural production. Consequently, a new agricultural strategy was adopted in the early sixties to

accelerate the process of agricultural development.

The new agricultural strategy was based on the thinking that intensive application of science and technology in agriculture would bear fruits in the form of massive increase in foodgrain production. Under this strategy, adopted in early sixties, agricultural development programmes were revised to meet the needs of the farmers. Major programmes undertaken in this regard are discussed briefly in the paragraphs that follow.

The Intensive Agricultural District Programme (IADP), popularly known as the Package Programme, was started in 1961 on a pilot basis in seven districts of the country. The programme was subsequently extended to cover some other districts. It aimed at combining improved technology, credit, high yielding seeds and assured irrigation for stepping up agricultural production. This experiment of intensive agriculture yielded significant results. Production of foodgrains remarkably increased and the programme was extended to cover larger areas. It resulted in giving rise to a new programme called the Intensive Agricultural Areas Programme (IAAP).

Encouraged by the unprecedented success of this programme some other schemes were introduced in late sixties. They included the High-Yielding Varieties Programme (HYVP), Small Farmers' Development Agency (SFDA), and the Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers Development

Scheme (MFALDS). All these schemes were supplemented by the assured supply of inputs like fertilisers, pesticides, institutional credit and increased irrigational facility. Among all these programmes, the HYVP made spectacular impact. The progressive increase in areas under high yielding varieties resulted in substantial increase in foodgrain production. Wheat production more than doubled by 1977-78 and rice production also started increasing. The progress under maize, *jowar* and *bajra* was, however, rather slow, but did not remain too far.

Green Revolution, which saw the light of the day in the late sixties, has sustained till date. It began with Wheat Revolution but subsequently rice surpassed it. Other crops like pulses, *jowar*, maize and *bajra* also did not remain too far. It was widespread as it continued its journey from Punjab to other regions of the country. Now we are not only self-sufficient in foodgrains but also have started exporting it. Our view in this regard is amply supported by the latest foodgrains statistics available to us.

The overall production of food grains for 1999-2000 at 208.87 million tonnes is 5.26 million tonnes more than the last year. The production of rice during this period was 89.48 million tonnes as against the production of 86.00 million tonnes during 1998-99. The production of wheat was 75.57 million tonnes during 1999-2000 as against the production level of 70.78

million tonnes during 1998-99. However, during this period the production of coarse cereals (*jowar*, *bajra*, maize etc.) is estimated at 30.47 million tonnes as against the production of 31.35 million tonnes during 1998-1999. Being dependent entirely on rainfall, the output of coarse cereals shows considerable variation over the years.

Socio-economic Consequences of Green Revolution

Green Revolution has certainly improved the food situation in the country. It has solved the problem of hunger and has given a strong base to the Indian economy for further growth. It has transformed the mindset of farmers. In this respect Andre Betelle, has aptly remarked, "The Green Revolution has indeed created a new faith in the dynamism of the Indian farmer who has shown himself to be capable not only of quickly absorbing technological innovations but also of handling social arrangements with considerable dexterity."

However, the impact of this programme has not been equally favourable for all sections of agrarian population. What we wish to point out here is that the Green Revolution has brought destabilising impact on the socio-economic condition of small and poor peasants, share-croppers and landless agricultural labourers.

The new technology and the other inputs such as improved seeds, fertilisers, pesticides, water etc. are

beyond the reach of small and marginal farmers. Naturally, some regions with large landholdings like Punjab have performed better than others like Bihar and Orissa where marginal and poor farmers are in plenty and institutional credit is not easily available. This has widened the gap between the small and the rich farmers.

Secondly, the affluent farmers are enjoying the fruits of increased profits from land but the real wage rate for agricultural labourers has been declining in most places. Most of the share-croppers are now joining the rank of landless labourers because small holdings are not available for leasing out to these share-croppers.

Thirdly, economic inequality in agrarian sector has widened resulting in increased agrarian unrest in rural areas. During the late sixties and the early seventies numerous cases of conflicts were reported particularly from the Green Revolution belts. The situation became serious and the Ministry of Home Affairs of the Government of India studied the causes and nature of agrarian tensions and admitted the socio-political implications of the new agricultural strategy. The Report concluded that new agricultural strategy has created "widening gap between the relatively affluent farmers and the large body of small holders and landless agricultural workers." Analysing this problem, P.C. Joshi argues that conflict and discontent are inherent in the 'outmoded agrarian structure'. While

such an agrarian structure provides the basic cause of tension, the 'proximate' causes which have led to the eruption of 'latent' discontent into 'manifest' tension are located in the new agricultural strategy and the Green Revolution.

The poor peasants, share-croppers and landless agricultural labourers have not been able to share profitably in the general prosperity, which came in the wake of the green revolution. In this context, T. K. Oommen shows that "the green revolution as such does not lead to the welfare of the agrarian poor unless substantial alterations in the prevalent socio-economic and political structures are effected at the grass roots."

Finally, increased agricultural production has been visible mainly in areas like Punjab, Haryana, western Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra. In this fashion, substantial areas in the country have not been benefited by this agricultural change. Likewise a new class of capitalist farmers has emerged in the green revolution belts. Another important trend suggests that the agricultural production has increased but the social index has not changed in the same proportion. For example, the gender-ratio in those areas where agricultural prosperity has been achieved is still unfavourable. However, despite these limitations the Green Revolution has undoubtedly paved the way for faster economic growth and corresponding social change.

GLOSSARY

EQUITY. Equity is the idea of treating people with equality and in the absence of discrimination.

KHEDA AGITATION. Movement led by the poor peasant against the exploitative methods of the landowners during pre-Independence time.

TEBHAGA MOVEMENT. It was also a peasant movement.

INTERMEDIARIES. They were middlemen between the *Zamindars* and the actual tillers of the soil who usually exploited the poor peasant for their selfish ends.

LAND CEILING. To fix a specific area of land to be acquired by landowners. This scheme was stated as a measure to ensure equality and distribute excess land among the landless.

EXERCISE

1. What do you understand by land reforms?
2. What were the main objectives behind land reforms in India?
3. What were the objectives of land reforms after Independence?
4. Why was the abolition of intermediaries a major objective of the land reform in India?
5. What was the objective behind fixing ceiling on land holdings?
6. Discuss the socio-economic consequences of Green Revolution in India.

SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Joshi, P.C., *Land Reforms in India*, Allied Publishers, New Delhi, 1975.
2. Beteille, Andre, *Studies in Agrarian Social Structure*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1974.
3. Dubey, S.C., *Traditions and Development*, Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi, 1990.
4. Sharma, K.L., *Rural Society in India*, Rawat Publications, Jaipur, 1997.
5. Smelser, Neil J., *The Sociology of Economic Life*, Prentice Hall, New Delhi 1975.

CHAPTER 6

New Groups, Classes and Globalisation

While studying social structure and stratification, you must have noticed that caste and class are two major forms of social stratification. These two systems are also expressed in terms of 'closed' and 'open' class systems. Structures of stratification vary in their rigidity from one society to another, and from one period to another in the same society. Thus, patterns of stratification are not always static. Changes do occur in their nature and structure. Thus, it, is not only the class position of an individual which may change one but the caste position may also change in a generation or two. We have also pointed out this aspect of mobility in caste while discussing the process of Sanskritisation in an earlier section. What we intend to highlight here is that new groups and classes emerge in every society in the wake of social change. In most of what follows, we shall confine our illustrations to the Indian society and discuss the nature of new groups and classes which are emerging due to social change.

Trends of change in Indian society show the emergence and consolidation of new groups and classes. This is

visible not only in the rural areas but also in the urban and industrial settings. However, in the absence of systematic sociological studies on the nature and size of these groups and classes, it is a difficult task to give conclusive statements about them. We have, therefore, selected only a few groups to illustrate this trend.

Gentleman Farmer

The composition of the traditional landowning class is changing in the country. Earlier, most of the landowners inherited land from their ancestors. Land could not be purchased in the market because the land market was not fully developed. But this situation has changed now. The restructuring of agrarian system has set in as a result of the land reforms and the Green Revolution. The introduction of new technology in agriculture has transformed the mode of agricultural production. Resources other than land have assumed importance. Resources such as tractors, mechanised ploughs, pump-sets, power threshers and others are acquired through the market. Today

even if one has not inherited land through the traditional channel, it is possible for one to join the class of landowners.

In this fashion, a new class of farmers is emerging consisting of persons with different skills and experiences. They no longer belong to the traditional landowning upper castes. There are the people who have retired from the civil and military services and have invested their savings in agricultural farms. This is the story behind the emergence of Gentleman Farmers.

This group now attracts the people who are educated and wish to make agriculture their vocation. The increased profitability of agriculture is the primary reason behind it. These agricultural farms are run like business firms with all features of modern organisations. In this respect, there is a substantial difference between the traditional agricultural system and the emerging system.

Capitalist Farmers

The emergence of capitalist farmers is another important development in independent India. The question whether and to what extent capitalism has penetrated Indian agriculture is still being debated, but the trend in agriculture as in industry is clearly towards infusion of capital. A capitalist form of wage-labour agrarian system has replaced the traditional customary land relation. There is a clear transition from the peasant family farms to the commercial-capitalist farms.

A powerful class of rich peasants, undoubtedly, existed even earlier but they could not be characterised as capitalist farmers because there was no capitalist penetration in agriculture as such. However, in the recent past, apart from the land reforms, other forces are at work in agricultural sector. Introduction of new technology along with several other schemes of agricultural development have facilitated a small section of rich peasantry to emerge as powerful commercial and capitalist farmers. Extensive facilities and resources such as supply of high yielding variety of seeds, fertilisers, improved implements, irrigation as well as facilities of credit and improved transport and communication—all have been fully utilised by these farmers. The capitalist farmer hires labourers for accomplishing her/his requirements. The actual tillers of the soil are the wage-labourers employed by the capitalist farmers. The latter is involved in agriculture only to appropriate profits from it. A surplus is, thus, generated in agricultural production that is reaching to the market.

The size of the class of capitalist farmers is still small in the country today. But its emergence and growth reveal a significant aspect of change in the agrarian social structure. The emergence of this class has not only increased the efficiency and productivity of agriculture but also has helped industrial growth and development. However, this trend has widened the gap between the rich and the poor farmers.

Inequalities between the top and the bottom layers of the agrarian classes have accentuated leading to unrest in rural areas.

Dominant Middle-Caste Peasantry

The impact of the land reforms and the Green Revolution has not been uniform throughout the country. In certain regions, some sections have benefited more than the others. While the owners of large landholdings have pocketed the maximum profits in every region, the share of benefits to the small peasants has been limited almost everywhere. However, it is the middle peasant who have been the real beneficiary all over the country. A natural question is why has this been so.

The answer to this question lies in the very nature and composition of the middle peasantry in the Indian countryside. Middle peasants ordinarily belong to the middle caste groups. Though there is no all-India hierarchy of castes, it is yet possible to locate certain layers that may be characterised as middle. All those castes, which are below the upper castes but above the lower and Scheduled Castes, constitute the category of middle castes. It is not a homogenous category but as these castes possess some common features, they may be included under a single category. Some of the major features of the middle castes are mentioned below.

In the first place, they occupy a higher position in local caste hierarchy. No social disabilities such as untouchability and discrimination are

imposed on them. Secondly, most of the castes included in this category are traditionally peasant castes. They have been self-cultivating owners of medium size landholdings. Thirdly, unlike the upper castes, they have been directly involved in agricultural operations. Finally, populationwise they are predominant at the local level. In fact, the middle castes are like the dominant castes according to the formulation of M.N. Srinivas. Most of the features of these two categories are similar but they are different in terms of their location in the caste hierarchy. While a dominant caste may belong either to the upper or the middle caste group, it is not so in the case of a middle caste.

It is the middle castes, which have emerged as the dominant middle peasantry. They have derived maximum advantages from the land reforms and the Green Revolution. At the time of abolition of intermediaries like *Zamindari*, the *Jagirdari* etc. large scale land transfer took place. The members of these castes purchased most of these lands. Secondly, when the upper caste village dwellers started migrating to the urban areas in large numbers, the members of the middle castes bought their land. Finally, new programmes of agricultural development further helped the middle castes to improve their economic condition. Their peasant background provided them with an added advantage. Middle castes have, thus, achieved economic affluence within a short time.

The growing economic prosperity of middle castes was also instrumental in

extending their influence to the political domain. Here, again, their numerical strength contributed towards gaining political dominance. The phenomenal rise of castes such as the *Yadav (Ahr)* and the *Kurmi* in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, *Vokkaliga* in Karnataka, *Kamma* and *Reddy* in Andhra Pradesh is a pointer to this trend. Thus, the emergence of the dominant middle caste peasants reflects the changing reality of the Indian countryside.

Our discussion of some of the new groupings has, thus, been concerned primarily with those which have emerged in rural areas. Now, let us turn to the urban industrial setting where also several groups and classes have become visible. An important fact should be noted before we proceed to discuss the urban groupings. Groups and classes in rural areas, which we have considered above, are apparently new in the sense that they have appeared on the scene quite recently. But the situation in urban areas is quite different because groups and classes here are not new in the strict sense of the term. They emerged in industrial-urban setting fairly earlier but their position has now been consolidated both from the points of view of size and role. We shall examine some of these groups to throw light on the nature of change taking place in this domain.

Business Elite

An entrepreneurial class or business elite started emerging in India by the middle of the nineteenth century.

Although prior to the British rule a group of enterprising business persons and traders existed in the country, but the new business elite came into prominence only during this period. Traditionally, most of the business persons belonged to the trading castes and communities. But when a new link was established between the Indian economy and that of Britain members of some other castes also joined mercantile enterprises. As most of the business firms were under the control of the English persons, the Indian business persons mainly worked as middle persons and brokers to British firms. Thus, the emergence of the new business elite was initially linked with these activities. These groups of business persons were primarily commercial agents and not industrial entrepreneurs. Moreover, they were located mainly in Kolkata, Mumbai and Chennai regions because commercial and industrial activities were concentrated in these regions. The members of this group mainly belonged to the upper castes. For example, Jains, *Baniyas* and *Kayasthas* had the upper hand over others in Kolkata region, Parsis and Jains in Mumbai, and in Chennai region *Chettians* controlled such businesses.

During the early part of the twentieth century the Indian industrial entrepreneurs started competing with the British. *Gujaratis*, *Parsis* and *Marwaris* emerged as the dominant groups among the business elite. Sociological studies have shown two major characteristics of business elite

in India. In the first place, most of them are the members of the traditional trading castes and in this sense there is continuity with the past tradition. Secondly, there has been a close link of this group with the nationalist movement in India. These features, as Yogendra Singh suggests, "influence the role that the business elite play in the modernisation of Indian society."

The size and role of business elite has phenomenally increased after Independence. It has been primarily because of the expansion of industrial activities during the last few decades. The industrial business groups now organise their activities on modern scientific lines and are comparable to their counterparts outside the country. Trained managers manage their organisations. Thus, a kind of bureaucratic structure has emerged giving rise to a new class of industrial bureaucrats.

The accelerated growth of business elite suggests a significant change in the entrepreneurial motivation of the people. The group is gradually becoming broad-based as members of the diverse social groups and castes are entering into this fold. The industrial development of the backward regions in the country is a pointer to this trend.

The New Middle Class

The emergence of the new middle class is an interesting development in the era of economic liberalisation in India. Academic studies had, no doubt, focussed earlier on the character of the

Indian middle class in general, but it is only recently that the rise of the new middle class has attracted the attention of social scientists.

In a celebrated study of the Indian middle classes, B.B. Misra has suggested that the members of the educated professions, such as government servants, lawyers, college teachers and doctors, primarily constituted the bulk of the Indian middle classes. He also included the body of merchants, agents of modern trading firms, salaried executives in banking and trading, and the middle grades of peasant proprietors and rentiers under this category. This notion of the middle class has continued for years for the purpose of examining the role of the middle class in contemporary India.

It has been argued that in the early years of the Independence, material pursuits of the middle class were subsumed in a broader ethical and moral responsibility to the nation as a whole. A restraint on materialistic exhibitionism in a poor country was the ideal reflector in the character of the middle class. Changes have, however, occurred in the basic character of this class. Pavan Varma, for example, in his book *The Great Indian Middle Class* has initiated a significant debate on the declining social responsibility of the Indian middle class. It is in this context that the idea of new middle class has been made popular in India.

The current culture of consumerism has given rise to the new middle class. The economic liberalisation initiated in India in the 1990s portrays the middle

class as a sizeable market which has attracted the Multinational Corporations (MNCs). Images of the urban middle class in the print media and television contribute to the prevalence of images of an affluent consumer. The spread of the consumer items such as cellphones, cars, washing machines and colour televisions has also consolidated the image of a new middle class culture. Advertising images has further contributed to perception.

The new middle class has left behind its dependence on austerity and state protection. The newness of the middle class rests on its embrace of social practices of taste and consumption and a new cultural standard. Thus, the "newness" of middle class involves adoption of a new ideology rather than a shift in the social basis of India's middle class.

Critics of this new middle class have pointed out the negative effects that middle class consumerism holds in the terms of environmental degradation and a growing indifference towards socio-economic problems of the country. However, proponents of liberalisation have projected this new middle class as an idealised standard for a globalising India.

GLOBALISATION AND LIBERALISATION

The phenomenon of globalisation has aroused much interest since the eighties. We will discuss it in the context of social change.

Globalisation is one of the distinctive features of the contemporary world. The term is used mostly in an economic sense. Globalisation is the process of integration of world economies in conditions of free markets. Free market envisages free flow of trade and capital and movement of persons across national borders. Globalisation is, thus, identified with the new world trade order and opening up of commercial markets. Science and technology have greatly helped in the growth of globalisation. The whole process is facilitated by newly developed technology for immediate transmission of information.

Historically, the world had experienced periods of economic integration even in the later half of the nineteenth century and early part of the twentieth century. But the process was interrupted by the world wars, economic depression and restrictions on the movement of people till almost the 1970's. However, the process of globalisation received new impetus during the last two decades.

Internationalisation of production has been taking place in a big way through the MNCs. Large companies based in one country but operating in several countries are called Multinational or Transnational Corporations. The MNCs have thousands of affiliated companies all over the world. According to one estimate, their sales in 1998 were of the order of almost one-third of the world trade. These corporations treat the

globe as a single market rather than a set of national markets.

Moreover, trade beyond the national boundaries is substantially expanding as duties and tariffs are getting shapely lowered and other barriers are removed to increase the volume of foreign trade. Transport and communication costs have gone down considerably. Consequently, technologically advanced companies and enterprises move to different locations in different countries. Globalisation has opened up new avenues for the MNCs. The era of globalisation has unfolded new opportunities for both developed and developing countries. Globalisation is turning the whole world into a 'global village'.

Potential of Globalisation

Globalisation is supported on many grounds by its protagonists, some of which are discussed below:

The process of globalisation is based on the basic premise of free market. It is presumed that free markets beget competition and increase efficiency which is lacking in controlled markets. Increased efficiency improves quality of goods and services. Free market is particularly helpful to the backward economies.

Under the condition of globalisation, foreign investment flows into the domestic economy which makes it strong and bolsterous. These investments specially assist the countries that face the shortage of internal resources. In this manner, free

trade facilitates inflow of foreign capital and goods which is expected to provide buoyancy to the stagnating economies of the Third World.

Globalisation guarantees increased employment opportunities. More employment and more economic growth would create better quality of life for the people. As unemployment continues to be a serious problem for most of the developing countries, globalisation is projected as a panacea to the problem.

It is assumed that economic development would be achieved through the integration of economies, which would also take care of the issues of social justice. The innovative and rationalising mechanisms of the global economic order will make provision for safety nets for the disadvantaged groups. It is, thus, believed that liberalisation of economy, instead of causing havoc, provides new hope to the disadvantaged groups.

Furthermore, globalisation increases co-operation and solidarity among business partners at the international level. It also enhances co-operation at the governmental level. It gives rise to a new world order based on consensus and partnership. Values of reciprocity and solidarity among nations are supposed to usher in an era of world peace and amity.

Consequences of Globalisation

According to the United Nations' study in 1999, 'the era of globalisation is opening many opportunities for

millions of people around the world'. The study suggests that it offers enormous potential to eradicate poverty in the twenty-first century.

But the experiences of globalisation so far, particularly in the developing countries, do not follow this trend. It has given rise to serious risks for countries that are unable to become internationally competitive. The negative consequences of globalisation are more dominant compared to its positive potential. Increased trade, new technologies, foreign investment and expanding Internet connections have, no doubt, led to substantial economic growth in the world today but the gains of economic growth are not evenly distributed among different countries. There are several problems that emanate from this basic weakness.

The economic process under globalisation is connected with market expansion. The development of national market economies is integrated globally on market principles. The market system is always driven by the search for profits. Open competitive markets may guarantee efficiency, but not necessarily ensure equity. Therefore, great reliance on the 'invisible hand' of the market is pushing the world towards unsustainable levels of inequality. It has rightly been said that 'markets are neither the first nor the last word in human development'. There are several activities and goods, which are important for human development, but today they are overlooked in the rush to integrate with the global market. It

is evident in areas where the market frontier has moved in recent decades, such as in Africa and Asia. It has increased migration to cities, the anomie in urban life, the collapse of the extended family and the replacement of sentiments by money as the basis of human motivation.

Global capitalism is relatively free from regulations. But it enjoys the support of powerful capitalist states. A number of international economic institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) reinforce the ideology of global capitalism. These countries and institutions create the political and legal conditions for the global market. These conditions have been created by steps like (a) removal of barriers to international trade and services, (b) movement of capital, (c) global protection of property rights, (d) privatisation of state companies, (e) deregulation of business activities, and (f) phasing out of welfare services. All these steps have reduced the capacity of the nation states to provide essential social services to the people. The effects of structural adjustment policies in Africa, Asia and the south Pacific imposed by the IMF and the World Bank have been no less than disastrous. They have decreased the access to education, health and nutrition to the underprivileged sections of the population. Of course, it has extended these facilities mainly to the most privileged groups. Even in Europe, where the welfare state was

born, there has been severe reduction in these facilities.

At present, for developing countries, the risks are more than the advantages and opportunities. The most direct impact has been on jobs. For example, unemployment rates doubled in Asian countries where the depression of 1997-98 was worst. Wages in the current labour market are generally low. Intense competition for employment means that workers have low capacity to bargain in most countries. The real wages throughout Latin America and Africa have yet to return to levels considered normal twenty years ago.

Failure to create sufficient employment has undermined the prospects for poverty reduction. The number of people living in poverty fell in mid-1990s but then started to rise again in almost all countries. This is not because the world as a whole has been getting poorer but because the benefits of growth are unevenly spread. In fact, there has been a remarkable increase in inequality over the past decades. In the developing countries, the rich can easily adjust to the new environment, but the poor are becoming poorer.

Moreover, the economic globalisation is problematic not only because it complicates economic relationships between nations but also, because it concentrates economic power in the hands of the MNCs. Such a concentration of economic power leads to convergence of political and social power. In this fashion, social and economic rights of common citizens are restricted under globalisation. It affects

social policy and reduces the role of State activities.

It is against this background that some resistance against the imposition of external conditionalities on the country's economy has emerged at the people's level. The people in the developing countries are concerned about numerous international negotiations which are taking place on agriculture, services and patent protection. The concern is whether the developing countries would get fair deal in these agreements. These negotiations and agreements are held under the aegis of WTO which is the legal and institutional body of the global trading system. Member countries are supposed to follow rules and disciplines of WTO.

LIBERALISATION

The process of liberalisation is closely related to globalisation. Liberalisation is the economic content of globalisation. It is a process under which a highly regulated economy is transformed into an outward-looking economy. Domestic economy is liberalised through deregulation and decontrolling. The dominance of the state in most spheres of activity declines and gives way to private enterprises and companies. The privatisation of commerce and industry takes place by dismantling public sector units. The idea of liberalisation is essentially based on the thinking that the economy and society will be much better by reducing the state intervention. It is popularised by the slogan, *less state, better state*.

The process of globalisation, as we have seen, is integrating economies of the world. This process of integration is facilitated by liberalisation and privatisation of individual economies. In other words, various countries have to liberalise their economies by resorting to deregulation where there will be less and less control of the State. Liberalisation policy emphasises the efficiency aspect of economy. Private enterprises are considered more efficient than the public sector undertakings.

Challenges of Globalisation and Liberalisation in India

The processes of globalisation and liberalisation are more predominant in the modern world. Under such a condition, India too is facing challenges of these processes. A significant transformation has taken place in the country since 1991 as we moved from a highly regulated and inward-looking to an outward-looking economy. The dominance of the State in most spheres of activity is giving way to private enterprises.

You will understand this situation clearly if an example is provided to you. Indian economy has adopted the mixed-economy model. It is called mixed because it consists of two sectors—the private sector and the public sector. While the public sector is fully controlled by the state, the private sector includes enterprises owned by individuals. The public sector has played a dominant role in the Indian

economy. The State, thus, has been present in most spheres of activity. Its control and regulation have been wide ranging and even covered the private sector industries. The latter were controlled through numerous licenses and permits. In fact, this practice has been so widespread that the people often called it the *quota permit raj*.

It was this system of regulation and control that received a blow in the era of liberalisation. The process of liberalisation started in India around 1991 with numerous structural changes in the economy. Policy reforms opened up the economy. The first phase of reforms (1991–1994) focussed on the dismantling of controls and regulations in trade and industry. Taxes and tariffs were lowered. All these steps created a conducive climate for private investments—both domestic and foreign. Thus, the era of liberalisation witnessed a clear transition from an insular to an outward-looking and export-oriented economy.

The process of liberalisation and privatisation has further been accelerated in the second phase of reforms. Two major developments in this phase are encouraging more foreign direct investment and downsizing the public sector. India is a large market. From 1 April 2001, all quantitative restrictions have been removed and the market is now open for imported products. Disinvestment in public sector undertakings has not only been initiated, but several corporations have already been sold to private enterprises.

India has now completed the first post-liberalisation decade with satisfactory growth rates. Inflation has been contained. Industry is no longer protected from external forces. More recently, the breakthroughs in Information Technology (IT) sector has proved skills of Indian professionals who are in great demand in developed countries of the world. It is expected that IT-related services would give a boost to the economy in the years to come.

Notwithstanding these achievements during the era of liberalisation, there are still critical challenges ahead. Poverty continues to be one of the most important challenges. Around 26.10 per cent of the population is still below the poverty line. The situation with regard to employment continues to be grim. During the last decade, more retrenchment from jobs has taken place because companies have reduced their size or merged to face the rigour of competition. This is happening when the Indian economy is not able to generate sufficient jobs. Full employment, universal literacy, primary education, health care and raising the quality of life for all citizens

are equally challenging tasks to accomplish.

Privatisation is affecting women in many ways. It has already started reducing employment opportunities due to the introduction of sophisticated technology both in agriculture and industry. In India, women are more gainfully employed in handicrafts and household industries. They are mainly in unorganised sector. Economic liberalisation has affected this sector, which is threatened because of the entry of mechanised products and mass producers of these items in the local markets.

Under such circumstances, the challenge of globalisation today is to adjust rules and institutions for stronger governance to preserve the advantages of global market. While modifying these institutions the country has to provide enough space for human and community resources. It is imperative to ensure that globalisation works for the people because despite the attendant risks and challenges not a single country would be able to stop the approach of globalisation.

GLOSSARY

TENURE. *The legal conferment of the right to own land and other properties. It helps the State to administer and collect revenue. Many land tenure systems including *Raiyatwari*, *Mahawari* and *Zamindari* existing prior to Independence were abolished.*

INTERNATIONALISATION OF PRODUCTION. *The distribution of product in different parts of the world through the long chain of companies, i.e. Multinational Corporations (MNCs).*

GLOBAL VILLAGE. Establishment of technologically advanced companies and enterprises at different countries for enhancing business and relationship, which turn the whole world into a global village.

SOCIAL POWER. It is related with the concept of the globalisation and it restricted social and economic rights of common citizens.

WORLD TRADE ORGANISATION. An international organisation set up by the member countries of the United Nations. It was started in 1995 with the headquarters at Geneva. Through various laws and policies, WTO regulates and facilitates the international trade of goods and services.

EXPORT-ORIENTED ECONOMY. An economy in which a majority of its productive forces directed towards production of export goods and services. Many countries follow this strategy to get more foreign currencies which will be helpful to meet the import needs and domestic shortage of capital.

EXERCISE

1. What do you understand by globalisation?
2. Discuss the positive and the negative impacts of globalisation.
3. Explain the reasons for the emergence of Gentleman Farmers.
4. Who are the capitalist farmers?
5. What are the features of the middle class peasantry?
6. Write a brief essay on liberalisation.

SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Sethi, Raj Mohini, (ed.), *Globalisation, Culture and Women's Development*, Rawat Publications, Jaipur, 1999.
2. Mishra, B.B., *The Indian Middle Classes*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1978.
3. Hurrell, Andrew and Ngaire Woods, (eds.), *Inequality, Globalisation and World Politics*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1999.
4. Varma, Pawan, *The Great Indian Middle Class*, Viking, New Delhi, 1998.
5. Ram, Nandu, *The Mobile Scheduled Castes: Rise of a New Middle Class*, Hindustan Publishing Corporation, Delhi, 1988.
6. Fernandes, Leela, *Restructuring the New Middle Class in Liberalising India, Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, Vol. XX, Nos. 1 and 2, 2000.

CHAPTER 7

Education and Social Change

Culture is a learned aspect of the society. It is a social asset and all members of society share its elements. These cultural elements are preserved and disseminated through education from one individual to another and also from one generation to another. In this manner, there is a direct relationship between culture and education. While culture gives identity to a society, education sustains it. Education also plays a dynamic role in society. It performs the function of an initiator of social change. It not only generates new ideas and values but also transmits them to the younger generation. In this chapter, our attempt will be to examine the relationship between education and social change.

SOCIETY AND EDUCATION

Education emerges out of the needs of society. An individual member passes away in course of time, but society continues to exist and new members are added to it by birth. Every society, thus, tries to stay together as a unit and develops a way of life. The group members have to train children to carry on the customs, knowledge and skills

of the group to preserve and perpetuate their way of life. This function is performed by education. Education also trains people to develop new ideas and adjust to a changing environment.

Parents and family play an informal role in education. A more formal part comes from education provided by social groups and community agencies. School, which is especially established for the purpose, conducts the most formal education. School has, thus, become a social necessity for providing special learning. It makes possible the accumulation and transmission of knowledge on a large scale which were impossible before.

Education, thus, performs several social functions. Starting from the socialising role in a family, its tasks cover areas like economic organisation, social stratification and political ideas.

In every society, the process of socialisation of a child occurs within the family. But, as the skills and knowledge in a simple society are plain and uncomplicated, the occupational role is also learnt by a child at home. On the other hand, in the modern complex societies, the situation

substantially changes because of the change in occupational patterns. The complex skills and specialised tasks cannot be provided to a child at home. Therefore, the role of family gets restricted to only primary socialisation. The formal educational institutions take up the functions of secondary socialisation. Education performs the function of socialisation by transmitting norms, values, beliefs, attitudes and social skills to the new generation. Whatever a student learns in school is a part of the cultural heritage of the society. This process of learning moulds and develops the personality of the young members of the society.

Coming to the domain of social stratification, it can be shown that the educational system influences it in several ways. You know that caste is an example of closed system of stratification whereas class symbolises an open system. In a closed system, status is ascribed by birth, but in an open system a person ordinarily achieves a position. The closed system of stratification creates institutionalised inequality. However, this type of inequality is challenged in modern society. It is here that education plays an important role. Modern education fosters liberal values such as equality, freedom and scientific temper. It cultivates awareness against inequality, social deprivation and all sorts of discrimination. Education thus empowers people to demolish the closed system of stratification and opens it up for social transformation.

Moreover, modern education facilitates occupational mobility by creating new occupational opportunities.

The political system is another important dimension in which education plays an important role. While a political system directly influences the educational system, it is in turn affected by the latter. In other words, ideology, values and goals work upon the politics of the time. The ideals of democracy, socialism, secularism and social justice have essentially grown in the modern times because of educational development. In India, the educated and enlightened people, for example, provided the leadership in the struggle for freedom.

The educational system also diversifies the economic system. The economic value of education was not recognised by economists till recently. Economists now accept education as a factor that promotes economic growth. This is the idea behind the use and popularity of terms like human resource development. The educational system provides skills and training for different occupations. It prepares younger people for occupying different positions according to education and skills. It is because of the specific economic needs of different countries that they have different educational priorities. In order to achieve this goal, investment in education is regarded as a means to improve human resources that promotes economic growth.

It is obvious from the foregoing discussion that education not only

influences social change but also acts as an agent of modernisation in various ways.

Education and Social Change

We have examined how education influences different domains of social life. In this sense, it not only influences social change, but also acts as an agent of social change. Education engages itself in a much more positive action and can perform the function of an initiator of change. It inculcates in the younger generation whatever changes are desirable for rebuilding a society. Moreover, it cultivates necessary intellectual and emotional readiness to deal with challenges of change.

Education is an important instrument of modernisation. Modern values in social, economic and political spheres have to be instilled in the minds of people to achieve the goal of modernisation. Values such as equality, liberty, scientific temper, humanism and ideas against blind faith pave the way for modernisation. This task can be effectively performed by education.

EDUCATION AND MODERNISATION IN INDIA

Early Phase

In ancient India education was provided by the family, kin group and society as a whole through participation in daily life. But, as the needs and activities increased in course of time, a more systematic means of instruction was introduced and a

specialised occupational group of teachers was formed. Thus, the system of formal instruction began which the Brahmins provided. The Brahmins acted as formal teachers and were repositories of knowledge and learning. Teaching centres functioned around individual scholars and the learning process also emphasised the role of each individual student. This system of education emphasised more on life than on instruction. Thus, curricula varied from centre to centre. The transmission of religious ideas and the interpretation of sacred texts were the major functions of *gurukuls* and *vidyalayas*. However, this educational system was available only to a small section of the population that constituted the upper layers of the *varna* hierarchy. Subsequently, this system collapsed under the pressure of social and economic change.

Historically speaking, modern education appeared in India with the establishment of the British rule. Initially, the British rulers supported traditional schools and encouraged their expansion and growth. But, by the middle of the nineteenth century, the colonial policy changed and a decision was taken to introduce European literature and science in India. English was made the medium of instruction in the higher branches of learning. This policy concentrated on the education of the upper and middle classes. Little progress was made in establishing a suitable system of primary education. According to one estimate in 1881-82, 1 in 10 boys and 1 in 250 girls between the ages of 5 and 12 years attended

schools. About 90 per cent of the population were illiterate even in the early part of the twentieth century. The educational system, thus, not only maintained the gulf between the upper classes and the mass of the population but also increased it further.

There were significant limitations of the educational policy of the colonial period. Education was a priority given to higher education over primary education. The enrolment in colleges and universities increased at a higher rate than in schools. Consequently, modernisation through education remained confined to the educated and elite groups that ordinarily belonged to the upper castes. It hardly affected the mass of the population.

However, the system of education introduced during the colonial rule had several good points. It gave a fundamentally different orientation to the educational system and laid foundation of modern education in India. Its content was liberal and modern. The teaching of several new branches of learning such as science, technology and medicine created an environment congenial for modernisation. The structure of educational institutions was developed on professional lines. This structure, which classified institutions under categories like primary school, high school, college and university, continued even after the Independence.

Independence and After

Education in India has achieved amazing success during the last

fifty-five years. Its achievements, both in absolute and relative terms, have been remarkable. The fact becomes more visible when we compare the present situation with the one existing at the time of independence. We inherited an educational system which was largely unrelated to national needs and aspirations. It was quantitatively small and qualitatively poor. Only about 14 per cent of the country's population was literate. Only one child out of three had been enrolled in primary schools. In addition to low levels of enrolment and literacy, regional and gender disparities were also very apparent. The educational system faced problems of expansion, stagnation and wastage. It lacked vocationalisation and had no relationship with the social and cultural needs of the Indian society.

After the independence, it was recognised that education formed a vital aspect of the modernisation processes. Therefore, educational reform was accepted as an important agenda of national development. A comprehensive constitutional and policy framework was developed. The successive Five-Year Plans augmented the goal by launching several programmes of educational development.

We may assess the educational profile of India by first touching upon the literacy scene. In 1951, we had a literacy rate of 18.3 per cent which went up to 52.2 per cent in the 1991 census. The rate of literacy, according to the 2001 census, was 65.38 per cent. While the literacy rate in the case of the

male was 75.85 per cent, it was 54.16 per cent in the case of the female. It is apparent from these figures that there has been unprecedented growth in the field of literacy in India. It is fascinating to note that for the first time the total number of illiterates has declined by over 31.9 million in the last decade. The female literacy rate has increased by 14.87 per cent as against 11.72 per cent in the case of males. Such a remarkable progress in the rate of literacy has primarily been due to two major factors. First, the government-sponsored national campaign for literacy which has made tremendous impact. As the scheme has been decentralised, its accountability has increased. Second, the considerable involvement of Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) which have made the literacy campaign more flexible.

The expansion and the consolidation of elementary education have been equally remarkable. Universalisation of Elementary Education (U.E.E.) has been accepted as a national goal. This programme envisages universal access, universal retention and universal achievement. Now, almost 94 per cent of country's rural population have primary schools within 1 km. At the upper primary stage 84 per cent of the rural population have schools within a distance of 3 km. The enrolment at the primary stage has gone up from 42.60 per cent in 1950-51 to 94.90 per cent in 1999-2000. Similarly, the number of primary and upper primary schools has gone up from 2.23 lakh in 1950-51 to 8.39

lakh in 1999-2000 and the number of teachers in these schools from 6.24 lakh in 1950-51 to 32.17 lakh in 1999-2000.

A new scheme called *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA) has been launched to pursue universal elementary education in mission mode. The goals of SSA are to send all children in the age group of 6-14 to school by 2003 so that they complete five year of primary education by 2007 and complete eight years of schooling by 2010.

Secondary education acts as a bridge between elementary and higher education. It prepares young persons of the age group of 14-18 for entry into higher education. There were 1.10 lakh secondary and senior secondary institutions in 1999 in the country. 272 lakh students were enrolled in these institutions, of which 101 lakh were girls. In 1999, there were 15.42 lakh teachers in these schools. The vocationalisation of secondary education has been implemented since 1998.

The expansion of institutions of higher education has also been exceptional. On the eve of the independence the country had only 18 universities but at present the number of universities is 259. There are 11,089 colleges and 119 autonomous colleges. The growth of technical and professional institutions has been equally phenomenal. At present, there are 7000 teacher education colleges, 110 polytechnics, 600 management institutes, 550 engineering and technology colleges and 170 medical colleges.

Apart from expansion and spread of educational opportunities at different levels, special emphasis has been put to improve the status of women through education. It is believed that empowerment of women is a critical precondition for their participation in the developmental processes. Girl child has now become a target group. Similarly, educational development of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes has received added attention.

The educational scenario presented above quite evidently looks impressive, but actual efforts have fallen far short of the goal. The National Policy on Education envisages that free and compulsory education should be provided to all children up to the age of 14 years. This target of universalising elementary education is yet to be achieved.

The expansion and spread of education has brought about meaningful changes in the Indian society. The transition from 'class education' (education for a few) to 'mass education' (education for all) has widened the scope of unlimited entry into the educational system. The groups and communities who were deprived of access to education have now joined the national mainstream of development. It has not only disseminated universal values such as equality and humanism but it has also transmitted scientific world-view. Education has been one of the most important factors in transforming the outlook and attitude of the people.

The quantitative expansion of education has spread it to every nook

and corner of the country. It has shaken the age-old inertia and indifference towards education. The phenomenal growth of literacy and education among women is unprecedented. It has radically transformed their attitude and improved their status within and outside the families. Their economic contribution has also become conspicuous. The difference in attitude towards boys and girls is no longer prevalent as before. Such a change in society's attitude towards women's role has enabled them to enter spheres of occupational activities that were virtually closed to them.

As a result of the expansion of education, the degree of mobility among the members of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes has considerably increased. The overall state of affairs, however, is not so encouraging in this respect. The problems associated with these disadvantaged groups have been so deep-rooted that their solution requires overhauling of the social system itself. The national policy of providing equal opportunities as well as special opportunities to the underprivileged classes has begun giving positive results. Members of these communities have achieved considerable success in education. The rate of literacy has increased and the enrolment in primary and secondary schools has improved a great deal. Of course, their presence in higher education is still very low. The upper castes continue to dominate almost all areas of higher education.

It should be apparent by now that education has acted as a strong modernising force in Indian society. It is changing the world-view of the people. The growth of educational institutions based on the rational principle of science is itself an expression of modernisation. Increasing urge for education among the deprived and the downtrodden reveals change in their levels of aspirations. It has given an additional responsibility to the educational system. The educational system till Independence catered to the needs of the upper and the middle classes. A momentous change has occurred in this situation after Independence. A large number of lower caste children have entered educational institutions at all levels. Their aspirations and abilities being different, a new orientation is necessary to find out their talents and capacity so that their educational needs can be fulfilled.

Levels and the degree of mobility have also been influenced by education. Studies in India suggest that mobility at the level of caste generally operates in the socio-cultural domains and in respect of pollution and purity. Such changes are, however, reflected through changes in customs, practices, occupations, education and income of particular groups. Although these changes do not bring large scale change in the structure of stratification, some families or groups of families may raise their status

within their own castes and in relation to some other castes. What we are trying to emphasise is that education has played an important role in effecting mobility at the individual level which is gradually spreading out to the group level. Increase in the number of caste-free occupations is thoroughly the result of educational progress in the country. Education is a major element in the honour assigned to occupations. It plays a major role in determining what occupation one will achieve and, in turn, the level of one's income.

However, as we move away from the spectacular gains of education in India since Independence, we are confronted with the problems which the Indian system of education is facing today. The problems of standard, content and the social purpose of education are basic to our system of education. These issues have to be seriously debated and remedies evolved to make the system more effective and persuasive. As the nation has accepted the significance of education for the social and economic development of the country, its educational planning has to move in this direction. The report of the Indian Education Commission, appropriately entitled *Education and National Development 1966*, forcefully stated, "Education cannot be considered in isolation or planned in a vacuum. It has to be used as a powerful instrument of social, economic and political change"

GLOSSARY

EDUCATION. It is an agent of social change. It trains the people to develop new ideas and to adjust to a changing environment.

EXERCISE

1. What is education?
2. What is the basic function of education?
3. What is the relationship between culture and education?
4. How is education an agent of social change?
5. Distinguish between the close and the open systems of social stratification.
6. Analyse the role of education in bringing about social change in India.

SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Sachchidanand, *Harjjan Elite*, The Thomson Press Ltd., New Delhi, 1977.
2. Shah, B.V. and Shah K.B., *Sociology of Education*, Rawat Publications, Jaipur, 1998.
3. Perellus, Ann P. and Robert J. Perellus, *The Sociology of Education*, N.J.: Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, 1978.

CHAPTER 8

Mass Media and Cultural Change

We are living in an era of Information. The amount of information generated today is simply incredible and beyond one's dreams. It is primarily the result of the revolution in information technology. A convergence of telecommunication, television and computer has taken place. The sum of all these technologies constitutes information and communication technology. The latter has tremendous potential to transform various aspects of people's life. Under the condition, the transmission of information becomes a necessity, if information has to be put to use by people for their welfare. This function is performed by the mass media.

In common parlance, mass media means the media such as radio, television, print and films which are used to communicate to a large number of people. The term 'mass' is defined here in the sense of a large number of people of a community or a group or a country as against a particular class or category of the people. This notion of mass implies that mass media is different from other kinds of communication because they address a cross-section of a large population rather than a few individuals

or a particular section of the population. It is also called mass media because information is disseminated through these channels simultaneously to the masses.

Of late, two terms—mass media and mass communication—are concurrently used in the discussion on the subject. Some scholars also generally make a distinction between the two. While mass communication is the process in which information is disseminated to a large number of people, the mass media are the means of carrying this material to the people. Mass communication, thus, includes the transfer of messages and information from a sender to a mass audience. This transfer is done through the technologies of the mass media such as newspapers, magazines, television programmes, films, computer networks and so on. The sender in this case may be a person attached to some large media organisations or government agencies, the messages are public and the audience is large. Nonetheless we do not make such a subtle distinction between these terms in the discussion which follows. We, instead, use the term

mass media, which is more popular and serves our present purpose.

Mass media involve organised form of public message production and dissemination which include television, radio, films, newspapers and magazines. These means of communication are broadly categorised as print media, electronic media and audio-visual media.

Society and the Media

The discussion in this section mainly concentrates on social functions and general criticisms of the media.

Mass media provide information to people regarding day-to-day events and occurrences. This involves everything ranging from the weather condition to the local, national and international events such as politics, wars, and natural disasters. In large cities and towns where people are more separated from each other, the media keep them informed about what are going around them.

Secondly, entertainment is another important function of media. People get entertainment not only through obvious matters of entertainment like films but also through information provided by the media. Local news programmes, for example, furnish information as well as entertainment by devoting time in reporting violent crimes and sports. The local television channels in most of the cases survive primarily because they make profits by providing ample entertainment to the people.

Thirdly, the media now play an increasing role in socialisation of the young. As you know, family, peer group and school normally act as primary agents of socialisation. However, with the development of mass media, children come under the active influence of the media usage. Musicians, dancers, sport heroes, actors and actresses give young people new ideas about how to behave and how to dress. Certain values, attitudes and beliefs projected through media are also imbibed by them. Martin Esslin in his book *The Age of Television* points out that television brings an endless stream of collective daydreams and fantasies in our homes, and this leads to a blurring of the difference between fact and reality, the real world and the fantasy world. Television feeds our desire to be rich and caters to our erotic desires. This aspect of media effects diverts our attention from the reality of life and brings loss of the ability to think logically.

Finally, the media lend a hand in maintaining cultural continuity. They play an important role in keeping cultures alive. In the fast changing world, several elements of culture are disappearing from the scene. By showing these elements in media programmes, the people are reminded of the existence of such elements and cultural practices. In India, for example, it is radio which broadcasts programmes of classical music and attempts to continue this tradition.

Let us now consider the negative effects of the media. There are scholars,

educators and others who have been very critical of the consequences of the media. Some of the criticisms directed at the mass media are:

- (a) It encourages escapism.
- (b) It leads to passivity and distracts people from serious matters of life.
- (c) It kills individual tastes and leads to cultural homogenisation.
- (d) It uses female gender to sell products through advertisements.
- (e) It presents a false picture of reality.

Most of these criticisms are not essentially directed against the instruments of the mass media, but they refer primarily to the nature and themes of the programmes covered by them. These arguments also reflect the limitations of the media policy of the State and society where these channels are operating. These negative aspects of the mass media, however, are not going to stop the advancing pace of it in the modern society. We have to live with them.

The Media Scenario in India

India has been a land of great mass communicators. Being a country of diversities, communicating with a large number of people simultaneously has always been a problem. In the past, when modern channels of communications such as television and Internet were not available, people used to receive information through interpersonal communications. These sources included religious preachers,

human messengers, traders, travellers and other forms of traditional channels. Thus, all kinds of communication strategies, models and experiments have been tried since long. However, the traditional sources of information are no longer popular as new communication avenues are available.

The mass media play a vital role in creating in people awareness by providing information and education, besides healthy entertainment. All major communication media—print, electronic and audio-visuals—have developed in the country. Let us now briefly describe the media scenario in India today.

Print Media

As the term itself suggests, the print media include newspapers, periodicals and magazines of different types.

According to the Annual Report of the Registrar of Newspapers in India (RNI) for the year 2000, the total number of newspapers and periodicals being published in India was 49,145 as compared to 46,655 during 1999, registering an increase of 5.34 per cent. There were 5,364 dailies, 339 tri/bi weeklies, 17,749 weeklies, 6,553 fortnightlies, 13,616 monthlies and 3,425 quarterlies etc. Newspapers were published in as many as 101 languages and dialects during 2000. The largest number of newspapers (19,685) was published in Hindi followed by English (7,175) and Urdu (2,848). Daily newspapers were

published in all principal languages except in Kashmiri. Newspapers are published from all states and union territories. *Bombay Samachar*, a Gujarati daily, published from Mumbai since 1822 is the oldest existing newspaper. As per the RNI's report, the total claimed circulation of the Indian newspapers during 2000 was 12,69,63,763 copies.

The modern print media has been strengthened through the establishment of various agencies. The Registrar of Newspapers in India (RNI) was set up in 1956 to allot newsprint for newspapers. Every newspaper/periodical has to be registered with the RNI. There are news agencies like Press Trust of India (PTI) and United News of India (UNI) to collect and supply news to newspapers. The Press Council of India has been established to safeguard freedom of the Press and maintain and improve the standard of newspapers and news agencies. The Government of India has its own Press Information Bureau and Publication Division to disseminate information on its policies, programmes and activities.

Electronic Media

Radio and television are the two major players in electronic media in India.

Akashvani : The privately owned transmitters started broadcasting in India in 1927. In 1930, these transmitters were taken over by the government and the broadcasting started in the name of Indian Broadcasting Service. It was changed

to All India Radio (AIR) in 1936 and it came to be known as *Akashvani* since 1957. Now, more than 100 FM (Frequency Modulation) radio stations have been operating in the country.

The All India Radio presently has 208 radio stations and 327 transmitters. These include 149 medium wave, 55 short wave and 123 FM transmitters. From 28 May 1995 on FM channel and from 25 February 1998, AIR News on Phone Service is also available in the country. AIR is now connected to Internet for on-line information service. The present national coverage of broadcasting in India is 90.6 per cent by area and 98.8 per cent by population.

Doordarshan : Doordarshan (DD), the national television of India, is one of the largest terrestrial networks in the world. Television made a modest beginning in India on 15 September 1959 on an experimental basis with a station at Delhi. It was used as the medium for imparting social education. The regular service with a news bulletin in Hindi was started from 15 August 1965. The country's second television centre was set up at Mumbai in 1972. It was followed by Srinagar and Amritsar in 1973, and Kolkata, Chennai and Lucknow in 1975. In April 1976, Doordarshan was separated from All India Radio and was made a separate department. In 1984, a second channel was added to Delhi to provide an additional view option.

Now, DD reaches 87 per cent of the population and 70 per cent of the area of the country through a network of

1042 terrestrial transmitters. It has production studios in 49 cities across the country.

The educational television programmes are relayed from different Doordarshan Kendras in different languages. On 26 January 2000, Doordarshan started an exclusive education channel, *DD-Gyandarshan* in collaboration with the Ministry of Human Resource Development through the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU). In addition, the broadcasting sector has about hundred private television channels and cable networks all over the country which are telecasting programmes in different regional languages besides Hindi and English.

Audio-Visual Media

Film has been by far the most popular means of mass media in India. Feature films are being produced here since 1912-13. While R.G. Torney, along with Chitre, made *Pundarik* in 1912, Dhuniraj Govind Phalke produced *Raja Harschandra* in 1913. The talkies replaced the era of silent films in 1931 when Adeshir Irani produced *Alam Ara* (movie with dialogue). India is today the leader in the world in the annual output of feature films.

Films in India can be publicly exhibited only after the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) has certified them. In the year 2000, the Board certified 855 Indian and 252 foreign feature films, 1,058 Indian and 194 foreign short films, 111 Indian video

feature films and 38 foreign video feature films, and 503 Indian video short films and 167 foreign video short films.

The Films Division was established by the Government of India in 1948 to record, propagate and preserve the achievements of resurgent independent India. It has been a vital link between the people and the government. It is the largest national agency devoted to production and distribution of news magazines and documentaries.

Communication, Mass Media and Cultural Change

It is now recognised that communication is an important factor in development and change. It is assumed that transmission of new ideas through the mass media can create a favourable environment for change. Besides bringing about change in attitude and values, communication is also expected to impart knowledge of new skills and techniques. Communication helps to enlarge the mental horizons of people. It can be used to raise the levels of aspirations.

Despite a high rate of illiteracy, the importance of print media cannot be ignored. Now, newspapers are popular not only in urban areas. They have become popular even among the literate section of the village population. One copy of a newspaper is read by dozens of people in a tea or coffee shop. In reality, the newspaper has become a true mass medium. Similarly, television is also becoming a common source of

entertainment and transmission of current information. As a matter of fact the increasing importance of mass media has brought about some kind of revolution in the life of the people.

However, effects of mass communication have been diverse. The media-exposure has accelerated the process of change. People now know more about new things and places. Several new elements are added to their own culture. Even day-to-day life and practices come under the influence of practices other than their own. To put it little differently, various forms of the media have led to a cultural change. The expansion of modern means of communication has also given rise to new cultural challenges. People have realised the significance of their own cultural identity. They have revived interests in their cultural symbols and objects. The traditional group activities are reinforced with the help of modern means of communication. This process has integrated folk cultural institutions with the emerging cultural tradition. Sociologists call it 'cultural resilience' of the Indian people. This strength has led to a kind of cultural integration between the value systems of tradition and modernity.

Globalisation and Local Culture

We have defined globalisation, earlier, as an economic process. We now wish to add that globalisation is a multifaceted one rather than only an economic process. It is a set of processes that interconnect individuals, groups and communities. Such connections

lead to far reaching consequences for human beings. The social relation established under this condition is deeply transformed because life is more intensively interconnected. In this manner, under globalisation, the lives of individuals and the fates of communities increasingly depend on what takes place in distant places. Both national and local borders are weakened. Transcontinental and trans-national networks of activities are generated. New linkages are established in cultural terms. These changes refer to the cultural dimension of globalisation. In the light of this, we aim to discuss now the impact of globalisation on the local culture.

You know that culture is an integral part of human society. It is one of the major elements of a social system. Every society has its own culture with its own feature. The regional differences, however, do occur in culture within a single society. For example, we notice several streams within Indian culture itself located in different regions. There are different traditions in these cultural regions. We may call them sub-cultures. Some sociologists name such regional cultures as 'local culture'. The term local culture is used in a relative sense. When we talk about culture of a country, for the people of other countries it becomes a national culture. But if the reference point is cultural regions within a country, its context changes. For instance, Indian culture is a national culture of India for the Americans and the Britishers. But for Indians, local cultures include different cultural

patterns found in, say, Bihar, Orissa, Tamil Nadu or Kerala. We may even speak of local cultures of tribal communities.

What we intend to show here is the changes taking place in cultures of different groups and communities in the wake of globalisation. We notice significant cultural changes across the nation in the modes of consumption, style of dress, use of synthetic materials and so on. Changes are taking place in music, cultural performances, art forms and regional cultural traits. How far these changes are caused by the growing globalisation is difficult to say with certainty. But we cannot at the same time ignore the role of exposure to the trans-national cultural institutions and practices. Market and commodity-oriented cultural forces are causing dislocation of cultural values and practices.

Globalisation has increased the real as well as perceived threats to local and smaller cultural identities. The growing importance of market has converted cultural symbols into commodities. Culture is being offered for sale in bazaar. What we notice is 'marketisation of culture'. The emergence of tourism as an industry, increasing number of tourist resorts, and marketing of cultural objects are issues affecting the local communities. Such turn of events has led to the loss of meanings in cultural objects. The erosion of structure of folk culture is its natural consequence. Globalisation may thus cause cultural fragmentation because it threatens the core values of the cultural tradition.

Furthermore, globalisation presupposes homogenisation. It is based on the idea of uniformity and homogeneity. On the other hand, the essence of culture lies in its uniqueness. Diversity, not uniformity, sustains a cultural system. It is particularly so in a multi-cultural society. India provides the most suitable example of such a multi-cultural setting. Globalisation attempts assimilation of cultural traits and thereby denies plurality. The universalistic mission of global culture seeks to deny all cultural differences and specificities. As globalisation considers the entire world as a single system, its attempt is to create a global culture. Accordingly, the loss of local culture and subculture is legitimised to give rise to a global culture.

Thus, cultural autonomy of nations is in jeopardy under globalisation. At the social level, the structures and institutions of traditional culture get disrupted. The media texts produced in the Western countries have come to dominate media channels all over the world. In our own country, television networks have started broadcasting programmes that are made in foreign countries. These programmes destroy local cultures. They carry ideological messages that subtly brainwash people into accepting alien values and beliefs.

In the name of cosmopolitan culture, a shallow consumerist package is being distributed in the Third World countries. Under the influence of such a culture every relationship tends to become a short-lived activity for

monetary satisfaction. Values of sharing, collaboration and harmony decline and tension in society increases. This degradation in the realm of culture is indeed a serious negative aspect of the phenomenon of globalisation.

GLOSSARY

SATELLITE COMMUNICATION. It is a means which helps two different media to communicate from any part of world and establish a link between them.

AUDIO-VISUAL MEDIA. Means which provide facilities to communicate in both forms i.e. audio and video, like computer, television etc.

REVOLUTION. It is fundamental change of the existing social order. It does not occur gradually.

MARKETISATION OF CULTURE. The growing importance of market that has converted cultural symbols into commodities

HOMOGENISATION. It expresses the uniformity and homogeneity in the multi-cultural societies.

EXERCISE

1. What do you understand by mass media?
2. What are the functions of mass media?
3. Highlight the distinctions between print media and audio-visual media.
4. How does communication lead to development and change in society?
5. What is entertainment revolution?
6. What is cultural modernisation?
7. What is the cultural dimension of globalisation?
8. What do you understand by the term *local culture*?
9. Highlight the changes that have taken place in culture in the context of globalisation.

SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Malhan, P.N., *Communication Media : Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*, Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, New Delhi, 1985.

2. Singh, Yogendra, *The Significance of Culture in the Understanding of Social Change in Contemporary India*, Presidential Address, XXI, All India Sociological Conference, New Delhi, 1994.
3. Government of India, *Mass Media in India 1994-95*, Research, Reference and Training Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, New Delhi, 1995.
4. Chatterjee, B.K., *Mass Communication*, National Book Trust, New Delhi, 1978.
5. Agarwal, B.C. and Agni, M.B., *Television and the Indian Child : A Handbook*, UNICEF, New Delhi, 1987.
6. Lerner, Daniel, *The Passing of Traditional Society*, Free Press, New York, 1958.

CHAPTER 9

Dissent and Social Change

An element of dissatisfaction with the existing system can be found in every society. Dissatisfaction may be caused by poverty, social discrimination or lack of privilege. People may develop a strong desire to change the situation by raising their voices against the existing order. They may start questioning established practices of society. This difference of opinion actually reflects a desire for change. Social movements emerge under this situation. However, a movement does not occur suddenly. It begins with dissent, moves towards protests and finally takes the form of a social movement. This sequence—dissent, protest and social movements—represents different phases of social change. But in some cases all these may be in operation at the same time. The theme of dissent and social change has to be analysed against this background. We shall start this discussion by clarifying these concepts and then analyse the types of social movements.

DISSENT

The term 'dissent' refers to ideas and activities which are different from those

prevailing in a society at a given point of time. Differences of opinion and disagreement on certain issues are bases of dissent. Dissent is thus the beginning of a movement for change. For example, the struggle against the inhuman practice of untouchability in India was initiated only when the people who were suffering from this cruel practice raised their voices against it.

PROTEST

Protest is generally specific in nature. When dissent is expressed openly it assumes the form of protest. When a dissenting opinion crystallises further the situation of protest is created. Thus protest, in order to be meaningful, has to be supported by dissent in respect of the institutional arrangements prevailing in society at a given point of time. In fact, a consciousness of injustice and deprivation takes place at this stage. Accordingly, we may say that the social sharing of discrimination and deprivation is the starting point of protest.

Thus, we may say that dissent expresses dissatisfaction with the existing situation and registers

disagreement. Protest, on the other hand, is a formal declaration of dissent and represents a more crystallised state of opposition and conflict.

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Social movements are of great sociological interest because they are a major source of social change. A social movement is a sustained collective effort that focuses on some aspect of social change.

M.S.A. Rao says that a social movement essentially involves sustained collective mobilisation through either informal or formal organisation and is generally oriented towards bringing about change in the existing system of relationships. Rao considers ideology as an important component of a social movement. This definition highlights the following features of social movement.

First, social movement is a collective mobilisation as against occasional individual efforts. Groups and collectivism launch movement, but it is different from a crowd. A crowd has no group identity but no movement is possible without a group identity. A crowd is neither organised nor does it possess permanency. In contrast, social movements are organised collective endeavours. Thus the first important feature of a social movement is its collective nature.

Second, the organisational structure and leadership is another important aspect of a social movement. Distribution of tasks is required in every

movement. These tasks are assigned to different persons and units of the group depending upon personal qualities and commitments of individuals. In this manner, some kind of organisational structure emerges to fulfil the goals of a movement. When a persuasive leader, called charismatic in sociological literature, leads a movement, support of the masses tends to be spontaneous. Mahatma Gandhi's following in India's freedom movement is a well-known example in this respect. Decentralised democratic leadership may also be a popular strategy. In such an organisational structure elaborate system of local and regional level units and branches are established to strengthen the organisation. These units are required to be formed for mobilising the people, communicating messages and implementing action programmes. While such organisations are devised on the basis of movements' aims and objectives, they also express the collective will of the people.

Third, a movement cannot keep itself alive unless it develops its ideological frame and identity. An ideology of a social movement relies on sets of ideas that explain and justify its purpose and methods. Thus, ideological framework articulates aspirations and defines levels of expectations of the people. Moreover, ideology gives legitimacy to the action programmes of a movement. The ideological underpinnings provide the movement acceptability and recognition among the people at large. It also helps to generate involvement to the cause

and becomes a rallying point to assemble people to consolidate the gains of collective mobilisation. However, we should not lose sight of one important fact here. Although every movement evolves its own body of ideas and goals, it is frequently under the powerful influence of already established ideology. Gandhism and Marxism, for instance, have influenced several social and political movements in India.

Finally, change—orientation—is another significant aspect of social movement. Every movement is directed towards some change according to its aims and objectives. Therefore, the relationship between social movements and social change is well-established. However, the nature and extent of change intended may not be identical in all movements. While some movements strive for partial change, others may attempt to bring about large scale transformation of the social structure. Likewise, while some movements are change-promoting, others are change-resisting. You can learn more about this later.

Emergence of Social Movements

How does a social movement emerge? What are the factors that give rise to social movements? Under what conditions can a movement sustain itself? Answers to these questions will throw light on the origin and sources of social movements.

There are three popular explanations about the genesis of a movement. They are the relative

deprivation theory, structural strain theory, and the revitalisation theory.

Relative Deprivation Theory

Deprivation refers to a condition in which people lack what they need. A condition of relative deprivation, however, is based on a perceived difference between what people have in comparison with others. In this sense, relative deprivation exists when individuals or groups feel that they have received less than what they should have in view of their capabilities. In other words, relative deprivation is a discrepancy between legitimate expectations and actual achievements. The discrepancy may be in terms of economic conditions, social status or political power. For example, an educated unemployed youth may feel deprived compared to a similarly educated but employed person. Thus, a feeling of relative deprivation generates dissatisfaction against the prevailing conditions and gives rise to a movement. Most social movements have been studied by sociologists within the framework of relative deprivation theory.

Structural Strain Theory

Neil Smelser's structural strain theory argues that contradiction, conflict and strain in a society produce anxiety and uncertainty. Structural strain occurs at the levels of norms, values and facilities. This strain provides a motivation for collective behaviour akin to a movement. Although Smelser was one

of the first to theorise that social movements incorporate sociological factors, he has been criticised for placing too much emphasis on psychological motivation.

Revitalisation Theory

The revitalisation theory was initially put forward by A. F. C. Wallace. Wallace postulated that social movements develop out of a deliberate, organised and conscious effort on the part of members of a society to construct a more satisfying culture for themselves. This explanation of genesis of social movement substantially departs from the above two explanations. Both the relative deprivation and the strain theories are based on negative conditions. They argue that movements emerge because people experience deprivation and discrimination. The revitalisation approach, however, suggests that social movements offer a positive programme of action to revitalise the system. Thus, according to this theory, social movements not only express dissatisfaction and dissent against the existing condition but also provide alternatives for resurgence of the system.

Types of Social Movement

Social movements have been classified on the basis of numerous criteria. Nature of change intended, organisational mode and strategy, nature of demands, groups and collectivities involved are some of the major criteria used for the purpose.

Among the Indian sociologists M.S.A. Rao's classification of movements is widely accepted. Rao classifies movements into three types — Reformist, Transformatory and Revolutionary. Reform movements may be identified with partial changes in the value system and consequential changes in the quality of relationship. Transformatory movements, on the other hand, aim at middle level structural changes in the traditional distribution of power. Finally, revolutionary movements lead to radical changes in the totality of social and cultural systems.

Parth N. Mukherji has advanced a classification based on the nature and extent of changes that movements intend to bring about in social systems. Based on the criterion of change, he suggests three types—social movement, revolutionary movement and quasi-movement. "Any collective mobilisation for action directed explicitly towards an alteration or transformation of the structure of a system can be properly, understood as a social movement." When the collective mobilisation aims at effecting wide-range of and far-reaching changes in the major institutional systems comprising the whole society, we can rightly term it a revolutionary movement. Collective mobilisation, aimed at changes within a system, is a quasi-movement.

The typology of T.K. Oommen is based on the process of movement crystallisation, the life cycle and the phases of social movements. For him

movements are charismatic, ideological and organisational. Oommen also refers to classification of movements on the basis of locality, language, issues, social categories and sects.

These classifications of social movements are useful to understand the nature of issues involved in various movements. However, a close look at these typologies makes it evident that they are not in a position to include a large number of new social movements that have recently emerged in India. The difficulty is caused not because sociologists are not aware of these movements but mainly due to complexities of the situation. In some cases issues and participants are so much mixed up that it becomes analytically hazardous to separate them. For example, when tribal communities in different parts of the country are fighting for political autonomy, their movements are not merely political as these movements also contain cultural and social issues. The question of cultural identity is merged with political demand for autonomy. Thus, it becomes a difficult choice whether such movements be included under tribal movements or political movements. Similar difficulty is noticed in respect of other movements in which the participants and issues go together.

At this juncture it is necessary to point out that the term social movements is used in a very broad sense to include a variety of movements. Some of these movements appear as political or economic movements at first

sight, still they are included under the category of social movements. They are considered social movements because they are a major source of social change. We shall now discuss some major types of social movements in order to identify their role in social change in India.

Reform Movements

A reform movement attempts to improve conditions within an existing social system without changing the fundamental structure of the society itself. Reforms are often linked with belief systems, rituals and life styles of the concerned people. There are several examples of reform movements in India. The most well-known reform movement was the *Bhakti* (devotional) movement of medieval India. It was an all-India movement which involved the lower caste people and the poor. It insisted on love of God as the most significant thing in religion. It protested against ritualism and caste barriers. Thus, the primary objective of the movement was to reform world view and social practices of the people. It never tried to transform the social system radically, but advocated partial changes in the value system.

Several reform movements also engendered the socio-cultural regeneration, which occurred in the nineteenth century in India. It started with the formation of the Brahmo Samaj in Bengal in 1828 which had branches in several parts of the country. Apart from the Brahmo Samaj in Bengal, the Prarthana Samaj in Maharashtra and the Arya Samaj in Punjab and north

India were some of the other reform movements among the Hindus. The work of reformation was also undertaken by other organisations which were led by the backward castes and the members of other religious groups. For example, the Satya Sodhak Samaj of Jotiba Phule in Maharashtra and the Sri Narayan Dharm Paripalan Sabha in Kerala were started by the backward castes. Similarly, the Ahmadiya and Aligarh movements represented the spirit of reform among the Muslims. The Sikhs had their Singh Sabha and the Parsees, the Rehnumai Mazdeyasana Sabha. The major concerns of these movements and organisations were no doubt religious reform, but the social content was not missing from them. These movements brought about remarkable changes in the life of the people.

Tribal Movements

We use the term tribe for the people who are referred to as the Scheduled Tribes in the country. They are also popularly known as *Adivasi* or aboriginal. Tribal communities are scattered throughout the country but their population is substantial in the north-eastern region. In fact, in Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland tribals are in a majority. Similarly, the states of Chattisgarh and Jharkhand have sizeable tribal population. Altogether tribes constitute 8.08 per cent of the total population of the country. Different tribal communities have their distinct culture, language, social structure, values etc. These

communities have maintained their cultural and social identities.

Movements occurring among these communities are included under tribal movements. These movements have been directed towards numerous issues. While some of them have had agrarian content, others addressed cultural and political questions. Historically speaking, tribal movements have a rich tradition. The nature of struggles and issues involved in these movements differed considerably and therefore they have been sometimes referred to as 'tribal uprising', 'tribal insurrection' or 'tribal revolts'.

V. Raghvalah in his book *Tribal Revolts* lists seventy tribal revolts between 1778 and 1971. A survey of tribal movements undertaken by the Anthropological Survey of India reported thirty-six ongoing tribal movements in India in 1976.

During the nineteenth century several uprisings occurred in the tribal regions of central and eastern India. The Kol and Bhumij revolts of 1831-33, the Santhal uprising of 1855-56, and the Birsa Munda movement during 1874-1901 are some of the major tribal insurrections reported by historians. Ethnic identity and economy of tribals faced serious challenges due to the imposition of new revenue law by the British rulers. Imposition of enhanced rents, heavy interests charged by moneylenders and the atrocities of government officials forced the tribals to become tenants on their own lands. All these factors produced a series of tribal revolts.

It is important to mention here that tension and unrest among the tribals did not subside even after independence. In fact, several new tribal movements have emerged during the last few decades. Most of these movements are directed against issues of land alienation, forced labour, minimum wages and exploitation by non-tribal landlords. However, later, the tenor of tribal movements changed considerably and acquired political character. These movements have been differently described. Tribal political movements, ethnic movements, sub-national movements, and solidarity movements are some such expressions found in sociological literature.

The Jharkhand Movement of Chhotanagpur was spearheaded by the tribals demanding a separate state to protect them from *diku* (outsiders). The demand has finally been met and a separate state called Jharkhand was formed in the year 2000. The Naga Movement for a separate State outside the Indian Union is the oldest of all tribal movements in the country. It assumed a militant character from the very beginning and continues till date.

It is, thus, evident that tribal movements before and after the independence have not only been widespread but also they have been diversified in terms of issues, organisation and leadership. There is a strong tendency towards consolidating tribal the ethnic identities. This trend reflects the dynamism of these tribal communities.

Peasant Movements

The study of peasant movements has emerged as an important area in the study of social movements in India. Since India is essentially an agrarian country, it is natural that the study of agrarian problems has assumed a central place in sociological issues.

While talking about land reforms in earlier chapter we have observed the complexity of our agrarian system. Patterns of landownership, tenancy, use and control of land, all reflect the complex nature of agrarian structure. The complexity of agrarian structure is also manifested in the agrarian class structure which has existed since long in rural areas. The diversity of land systems and agrarian relations has produced an elaborate structure of agrarian classes. The latter vary from one region to another. However, based on the nature of rights in land and the type of income derived from it, Daniel Thorner has identified three major agrarian classes in India. They are (a) *Maliks*, (b) *Kisans*, and (c) *Mazdoors*. Big landlords and rich landowners are included under the category of *Maliks*. *Kisans* are inferior to *Maliks* comprising self-cultivating owners of land. They are small landowners and tenants. *Mazdoors* earn their livelihood from working on others' lands. This category includes poor tenants, sharecroppers and landless labourers. This classification of agrarian classes broadly reflects the Indian reality.

But it needs to be recognised that the agrarian hierarchy, as indicated just

now, corresponds with the caste hierarchy which we find in different parts of the country. The rich landowners and moneylenders mainly belong to the upper castes. The middle and small peasants come from the traditional peasants castes. The landless labourers belong primarily to the lower castes. Such a position merely shows a pattern. It does not refer to the exact situation in the rural areas.

We have mentioned the nature of agrarian class structure here to understand the structural background in which movements have been launched by different classes of peasantry. D.N. Dhanagare's study of peasant movements in India helps us to know the nature of these movements. According to Dhanagare, the term 'peasant movement' refers to all kinds of collective attempts of different strata of the peasantry either to change the system which they felt was exploitative, or to seek redress for particular grievances without necessarily aiming at overthrowing the system. Peasant movements thus include all kinds of movements, violent and non-violent, organised and sporadic.

India has a long history of peasant movements. The nineteenth century India is considered a treasure house of materials on peasant heroism. The most militant peasant movement of this period was the Indigo Revolt of 1859-60 in Bengal. Only a decade later, similar violent disturbance took place in Pabna and Bogra in Bengal in 1872-73. These struggles were directed against *Zamindars* who were the symbols of

exploitation and atrocities. The landowning and money-lending classes had consolidated their position not only in *zamindari* areas but also in *Raiyatwari* and *Mahalswari* areas. The small landholders, tenants and share croppers were the victims of the moneylender's tyranny. Accordingly, the peasants revolted against the oppression of the powerful agrarian classes. One of such revolts in *Raiyatwari* area is known as the Deccan Riots of 1875 that occurred in western Maharashtra. A series of *Maplah* uprisings in Malabar region of southern India also took place throughout the nineteenth century. They were expressions of long-standing agrarian discontent among the poor *Maplah* peasantry.

It is fascinating to note that peasants' grievances also became a component of the India's freedom struggle during the early twentieth century. The Champaran Movement in 1917, the Kheda Satyagrah of 1918 and the Bardoli Satyagrah of 1928 were the major non-violent anti-British struggles. Since Mahatma Gandhi was involved in these satyagrahas, they are popularly known as Gandhian agrarian movements. Most of these movements took up relatively minor agrarian issues but they succeeded in arousing political awareness among the masses. Thus, the most significant aspect of these movements was their simultaneous involvement in the nation-wide struggle for freedom.

However, peasants in other parts of the country were not inactive. They were

equally restive and raised their grievances. Between 1920 and 1946 several peasant organisations and movements emerged in Bihar and Bengal which protested against the deplorable condition of the middle and poor peasants.

But just before independence, it was the Tebhaga struggle of 1946-47 in Bengal, which was the most effective and widespread of all peasant movements. It was a struggle of share croppers (*bargadars*) to retain two-third share of the produce for themselves. The movement was the outcome of the politicisation of the peasantry which was made possible because of the efforts of the Communist Party of India and the Kisan Sabha. The Telengana peasant struggle, which occurred on the eve of India's independence, was another important struggle of the poor peasants. It developed in the Nizam-ruled Hyderabad State in 1946 and lasted for five years till it was called off in October 1951.

We have briefly discussed above the nature and features of peasant movements to familiarise ourselves with the role of social movements in social change. True, these movements have not always been successful in achieving their immediate goals but they created the climate which produced post-Independence agrarian reforms.

Dalit Movements

Broadly speaking, 'the untouchables' of the Hindu caste system are officially

known as the Scheduled Castes. The same category of castes is also called *Harijan*, the children of God, a term coined by Mahatma Gandhi in 1933. However, the word *harijan* has now acquired a negative meaning. The members of these castes prefer to be called *dalit*, the oppressed. We use the term *dalit* movements for all kinds of movements which are primarily based on issues concerning dalits. These include anti-caste movements, non-Brahman movements and social movements against untouchability led by Mahatma Gandhi. Other nationalist movements like peasant and reform movements, *dalit* movements also emerged during the pre-Independence period. These movements have been examined keeping them under two broader categories — non-Brahman movements and *dalit* movements. While the anti-caste non-Brahman movements were strong in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, *dalit* movements were spread all over the country. The Ad-Dharm movements in Punjab, the Satnami movement in Uttar Pradesh, Narayana Guru's movement in Kerala and Adi-Dravidas movements in Tamil Nadu have been some of the major *Dalit* movements. The larger anti-caste movements were led by prominent figures like Jotiba Phule, Babasaheb Ambedkar and E.V. Ramasami Periyar. They all attacked the system of exploitation at all levels. Nevertheless, the *dalit* movement is necessarily linked with the name of Dr. Ambedkar. He was its historical leader and the founder of its ideology. Initially, the movement was

confined to Maharashtra, but during 1930s and 1940s it spread to different parts of the country. Although the organisations, such as the Scheduled Caste Federation and its successor, the Republican Party, formed by Dr. Ambedkar, never attained all-India status, but their ideas had an impact on various local level dalit movements in different parts of the country. The growth of these movements reflects the increasing self-consciousness of the group. Thus, dalits have emerged as a distinct political group. They are no longer politically dependent upon the upper castes. Eventually, they have made an impact on the structure of power in India.

Another important trend in the dalit movement is manifested in the emergence of the Dalit Panther Movement which was launched by *dalits* of Maharashtra in the early 1970s. It was initially confined to the urban areas of Maharashtra but has subsequently spread to several other states. The Dalit Panthers denounce the dominant culture and attempt to articulate an alternative cultural identity of the oppressed classes. To propagate their ideas they have been publishing poems, stories and plays, which are now popularly known as *dalit* literature and are used to challenge the intellectual tradition of the upper caste Hindus.

The most vital consequence of these movements has been the consolidation of dalit identity. The pressure created by the mobilisation of the dalits has led to amelioration of their social conditions. Compared to their

conditions a decade ago, their social and economic position has relatively improved. The emancipation of dalits is essentially linked with their freedom from the bondage to the existing economic systems. As the economic system is still monopolised by the upper castes, their position in the caste as well as class system continues to be at the lower end.

Women's Movements

It is difficult to trace the origin of Women's movement in India. Most accounts of the movement start from the nineteenth century. But recently, social historians have discussed its history from the pre-colonial times. They suggest that the evidence of women's movement first appeared in the *bhakti* and *suft* movements of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It is not necessary for us to study this debate about the timing of the genesis of women's movement. The important issue for us is to realise that the authority of men necessarily determined the status of women. The oppressive condition of women was reflected in the social practices such as child marriage, polygamy, prohibition of widow remarriage, *sati* and the *purda* system. These practices continued till they were challenged by the social reformers of the nineteenth century. Therefore, most scholars maintain that women's movement in India began as a part of social reform movements. We may say that the process of highlighting women's issues began in the nineteenth century. In the early phase of the

twentieth century, Mahatma Gandhi voiced his concern about the degrading status of women in the country. It was because of his efforts that a large number of women came out of their homes and joined the freedom struggle. He adopted a revolutionary approach to raise the status of women. Gandhiji argued that women should be freed from social and legal disabilities. He emphasised particularly on the issues of women's inferior position in matters of guardianship, inheritance and marriage.

Women who joined the national movement recognised the importance of self-reliance, *swadeshi* and women's education. Such a political consciousness among women expanded the space available to women in public sphere.

During the same period several women's organisations emerged which paved the way for increasing role of women in socio-political activities. Prominent among these organisations were All India Women's Association and the Indian Women's Association. These organisations had branches in different parts of the country. Their activities were centered mainly on issues like women's education, improvements in health and sanitation, right to suffrage for women and the maternity benefits for women workers. In this manner, these organisations were successful in initiating a discourse on gender equality and women's rights.

The nationalist phase of women's movement ended after independence with an assurance to remove all forms of gender inequalities. The task of social

reconstruction undertaken subsequently further confirmed the goal. Consequentially, the women's movements were subdued for almost two decades till 1970s. However, during this period women participated in large numbers in several local level struggles in different parts of the country. The role and participation of women in the Shahada movement in Maharashtra, the anti-price rise movements in Gujarat and Maharashtra, and the Bihar movement led by Jayaprakash Narayan are still fresh in our memory. The twin objectives of struggle and development were adopted by organisations like SEWA (Self-Employed Women's Association) who fought against all forms of injustice.

Sociologists of women's movements in India show that the phase of autonomous women's movement began after 1970s. It coincided with the publication of the Status of Women Report. The Report highlighted the gender disparities in the sex ratios, life expectancy, literacy and opportunities. The government initiated steps to implement special programmes for women. Simultaneously, several autonomous women's groups were formed at the local and regional levels to fight against the prevalent patriarchal culture and against division of labour based on gender. Apart from these basic issues, the autonomous women's organisations took up several immediate issues such as violence against women, dowry death, rape and domestic violence. They organised protest marches and

developed support services like fighting legal battles on behalf of the oppressed women.

It is important to note here that in course of the autonomous women's movements in India, a serious debate cropped up about the idea of feminism. Feminism is a complex set of political ideologies used by the women's movement to advance the cause of women's equality. Feminism is also defined as a variety of interrelated frameworks used to observe and analyse the ways in which the social reality of gender inequality is constructed and enforced. Given this perspective of feminism, some activists questioned the applicability of the western notion of feminism to the Indian reality. They argued that the nature of male dominance in India is different from that in western society. Therefore, the demands and resistance

of women against males are also different. Madhu Kishwar, activist and the editor of *Manushi*, has emphasised the need to look into our traditions in this respect. She argues that we should try to separate the devastating aspects from the points of strength within the cultural traditions, and start using the strengths to transform the traditions. "Our cultural traditions have tremendous potential within them to combat reactionary and anti-women ideas, if we can identify their points of strength and use them creatively." Thus, feminism in the Indian context is not merely taken as an issue of theoretical debate for analysis but an approach to bring about social change. We may affirm that women's movements in India have played an important role in bringing and driving the women's issues to the national agenda.

GLOSSARY

DISSENT. It refers to the ideas and activities which are different from those prevailing in society at a given point of time.

PROTEST. It is a formal declaration of dissent and represents a more conformed state of opposition and conflict.

SOCIAL MOVEMENT. It is a situational collective effort that focuses on some aspect of social change.

RELATIVE DEPRIVATION. It exists when individual or groups feel themselves lacking what they should have according to their capabilities.

EXERCISE

1. What is the meaning of dissent?
2. What do you understand by the term protest?

3. What are social movements? Highlight the features of social movements?
4. Discuss the origin and sources of social movements.
5. How would you classify social movements?
6. What is reform movement?
7. What was the objective of the *Bhakti* movement in India?
8. Highlight the role of tribal movements in maintaining their culture and social identity.
9. Highlight the nature and features of peasant movements in India.
10. Discuss the role of women in bringing about social changes and awareness.
11. Highlight the consequences of *Dalit* movement.

SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Dhanagare, D.N., *Peasant Movements in India 1920-50*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1983.
2. Rao, M.S.A., (ed.), *Social Movements in India*, Manohar Publications, New Delhi, 1984.
3. Karna, M.N., (ed.), *Social Movements in North-East India*, Indus Publishing House, New Delhi, 1998.
4. Shah, Ghan Shyam, *Social Movements in India : A Review of Literature*, Sage Publications, New Delhi, 1990.
5. Karna, M.N., (ed.), *Peasant and Peasant Protests in India*, Intellectual Publishing House, New Delhi, 1989.
6. Malik, S.C., *Dissent, Protest and Reform in Indian Civilisation*, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla, 1977.
7. Omvedt, Gail, *Dalits and the Democratic Revolution : Dr. Ambedkar and the Dalit Movement in Colonial India*, Sage Publications, New Delhi, 1994.

CHAPTER 10

Social Deviance

In every society, we find people breaking established social norms. While some disregard marriage and family norms, others are involved in activities like shoplifting, drug abuse or alcoholism. All these actions are examples of deviance. Viewed this, deviance may be seen as a form of behaviour that violates norms.

No society can claim to have a complete conformity to its norms. Society maintains balance between conformity to and deviance from norms. However, all forms of deviance—from criminal behaviour to civil disobedience—are considered deviance because people perceive and interpret them as such. Norms and deviance are linked with cultural values. The understanding of deviance is socially important because it produces consequences not only for the individuals themselves but also for the social system as a whole. In this chapter we shall discuss two major aspects of social deviance, namely crime and violence.

UNDERSTANDING CRIME

Crime has been defined both in social and legal terms. Since all studies of

criminal behaviour have highlighted the legal aspects of crime, the legal definition of crime is more popular. According to a popular legal definition, crime is the "intentional act or omission in violation of criminal law committed without defence or justification." Thus, crime is an intentional act and the person knows the result of her/his action. For example, if one shoots another one even without any *specific intent to kill* her or him, she or he commits a crime because she or he knows that it will cause injury or death. A criminal act is a violation of the criminal law of the land. As a result of this, whenever such an act is committed, the state (police) initiates action against the wrongdoer. Another important element of this definition is that the act should have been committed without justification. Therefore, if the act is proved to be in self-defence, it will not be considered a crime even if it causes injury or harm. Thus, the legal definition of crime emphasises the circumstances in which a crime is committed.

The social explanation of crime, on the other hand, emphasises the non-legal aspects of a crime. In this sense,

crime is a behaviour or an activity that disregards the social code of a particular community. Such a deviation is considered to be 'an anti-social act'. Since a crime threatens the social order and endangers person and property, it is regarded as dysfunctional to society as well as an individual. Accordingly, the sociologists consider as crimes not only theft, robbery and murder but also vandalism, suicide, drug addiction etc.

It is important to bear in mind that the social definition of crime looks for the source of crime in the very nature of society rather than in the biological or psychological nature of the individual (criminal). Thus, sociologists like Robert K. Merton argue that deviance is the outcome of the culture and structure of a society itself. It is not the result of 'pathological personalities'. As norms and values of different societies are different, the nature of conformity to these norms is also different. Crime is also related to degrees of social cohesion and the extent of social control existing in a society. It reflects the breakdown of social cohesion because it appears that the individual is unrestrained from the public pressure.

Obviously, the legal and social definitions of crime lay stress on the different aspects of a crime. The legal dimension is essentially based on the legal code, while the social dimension highlights the societal norms. The former is codified and ordinarily written, while the latter is more often than not abstract and subtle. In several cases they do not coincide. For example,

dowry is now an offence in India under the Anti-Dowry Act. But it continues to be widespread all over the country. Thus, dowry is a crime but its social acceptance exists as the people unhesitatingly indulge in this practice. Accordingly, it becomes difficult to resolve which type of violation of norm is a crime and which is not a crime. However, the legal definition of crime is more precise and explicit and it is used for all practical purposes. It is used in compiling crime data and for official actions.

Explanation of Criminal Behaviour

As in the case of several other social phenomena, the criminal behaviour has also been explained differently by different scholars. We shall consider here the four major explanations of crime—biological, psychological, economic and sociological.

The biological explanation of crime is also known as the theory of 'born criminal'. It is primarily based on the physiological and hereditary aspects of criminal behaviour. According to this explanation, the primary cause of crime is 'biological inferiority'. It believes that biological inferiority is inherited and is reflected in characteristics such as sloping forehead, thin lips, body hair, small ears etc. Thus, a particular type of biological inferiority causes a particular type of crime. In this sense, the criminals constitute a distinct type and are born, not made by the society. This understanding of crime has not only been sharply criticised but has

almost been rejected. The biological notion of crime has no valid scientific basis and is one-sided. Criminality is not a biological but a social fact. It is, therefore, meaningless to give voice to the biological factor without taking into account the learning and social experience and dimension of the problem.

The psychological analysis of crime causation is largely concerned with the relationship between mental deficiency and crime. Charles Goring, on the basis of his study of prisoners, claimed that there was more 'weak-mindedness' in the prison population than in the general population. He, thus, concluded that mental deficiency was an important cause of crime. Another study reported results of intelligence tests; and maintained that the greatest single cause of delinquency and crime was low-grade mentality or feeble-mindedness. In broader terms, psychological traits like dominance or submission, optimism or pessimism cause ways of behaviour which are established in the young child. They lead to emotional disturbances causing delinquency and crime. Hence the psychological explanation of crime attempts to locate causes of criminal behaviour in the psychology of human beings.

As against the biological and psychological causes of criminal behaviour, there are scholars who situate crime in the economic structure of the society. They focus on the influence of economic conditions on criminal behaviour. This approach

shows that a criminal is a product of the economic environment in which she or he lives. By showing a relationship between crime and poverty, it has been concluded that the rate of crime is higher among the poor than the rich. In the course of his research, a British criminologist, Cyril Burl found that 19 per cent juvenile delinquents belonged to extremely poor families and 37 per cent to poor families at a particular time. The idea of economic explanation of crime is also found in the Marxian approach. Marx, of course, did not specifically talk about a theory of criminal behaviour but he argued that the economic system determines various dimensions of social relationship. The environment for criminal behaviour is created by the economic disparity that exists in a society. The unequal distribution of property and power leads to sharp class division in which the underprivileged and unemployed resort to crime. However, it is difficult to show a direct relationship between poverty and crime. Criminals are not found only among the poor. A large number of criminals are also from the upper classes. We find more criminals in poor families because it is easier to locate them. On the other hand, criminals from the rich and the upper class groups escape arrests and convictions due to their influence and power.

Finally, let us examine the sociological explanation of crime. Sociologists argue that criminal behaviour is learnt and is conditioned by social environment. But this basic

issue of the causation of crime has been approached differently by sociologists.

The *social disorganisation approach* explains crime in terms of pathological living conditions and breakdown of harmonious relations. This explanation was not essentially concerned with the study of crime itself but emerged out of the studies concerning problems of urban living. According to this approach, criminals and deviants are seen as a small minority who occupy a marginal position in society. It is primarily the result of faulty socialisation.

The *structural approach* shows the relationship between crime and social structure. Durkheim suggested that the causes of individual deviation were related to the degree of integration and cohesiveness existing in a society. In this sense, deviant behaviour is a normal adaptation to living within a society. During his study of suicide, Durkheim developed the concept of anomie and used it to explain the condition of normalness. He claimed that anomie resulted from a social failure to control and regulate individual behaviour. Subsequently, R.K. Merton used the concept of anomie beyond suicide and explained all forms of deviance. Anomie is dependent on the interaction between cultural goals and institutional means. In other words, when institutional means are not adequate to achieve cultural goals, it leads to weakening of people's commitment to the culturally prescribed goals. It

gives rise to a state of anomie. In this way, Merton explains that certain social structures put pressure on some person to engage in non-conformist rather than conformist behaviours.

VIOLENCE

The study of the nature and scale of violence has assumed a central place in social sciences, today. Historians and political scientists have written a lot on political and military violence. Psychologists have conceptualised its basic nature within the framework of individual psychology. Then, lately, sociologists have discussed the nature of violent behaviour in the context of social change. The intent of this section is to examine only three aspects of the phenomenon of violence, namely meaning of violence, violence as a strategy of change and the nature of violent activities prevailing in contemporary India.

Meaning of Violence

The starting point for an understanding of the meaning of violence is to show whether 'aggression' as the cause of violent behaviour is 'given' in humans or it is acquired from the society. Some scholars suggest that aggression is inherent in animal behaviour. By applying this observation, drawn from animals, they argue that aggression and violence are also inherent in human beings. Nevertheless, we are not inclined to take such a position. Human beings are not at the levels of animals.

Therefore, human violence cannot be understood from the standpoint of animal behaviour.

Human beings are not essentially violent. They acquire violent instincts in course of socialisation. Such violent instincts once acquired are further intensified by social and environmental factors. This provides the social context in which violent behaviour can be explained adequately.

Violence is a direct or indirect action applied to restrain, injure or destroy persons or property. In this sense, violence is not only inflicting damage or injury to persons through direct physical attack but it may also be indirectly causing damage to persons or property. Preventing workers to enter the factory through picketing may not look violent as no physical force is applied to damage the property of the factory, but it may cause loss of production. This is called indirect damage.

Violence is, thus, different from aggression. While aggression is the entire spectrum of assertive and attacking behaviours, violence is a sub-form of aggression and is accompanied by emotional anger or hostility. The physical assault induced by anger occurs when people feel that they cannot achieve their goals due to interference from external forces. For example, when landless people realise that the existing agrarian structure itself is an impediment to change, they may resort to violence to transform the system. What we attempt to clarify is that the cause of violence is located in social system itself.

Lewis Coser in his famous book *The Functions of Social Conflict* argues that violence, in its occurrence and form, is socially structured. He highlights some positive social functions of violence. Violence serves social structures by furnishing mechanisms for conflict resolution when established authority fails to accommodate demands of various groups. C. Wright Mills also says that all politics is a struggle for power, the ultimate kind of power is violence. Ted Robert Gurr in his often quoted work *Why Men Rebel* maintains that political violence is a part of the self-adjusting conflict situation which contributes to societal equilibrium.

It is obvious that sociologists do not use the term violence strictly in the psychological sense of a violent personality. They have added social meaning to uses of the term. This aspect of the problem will be further clarified when we deal with the types of violence.

Types of Violence

One broad distinction is made between personal violence and structural violence. Examples of personal violence are murder, physical assault and abuse due to personal rivalries, property disputes and so on. Structural violence, on the other hand, is rooted in the exploitative and inequalitarian social system. Caste system in India and race relations in the United States of America are suitable examples of exploitative social system.

Political violence broadly comprises three major types—turmoil, conspiracy

and internal war. Turmoil is a relatively spontaneous and unorganised political violence. It includes violent political strikes, riots, political clashes etc. Conspiracy is a highly organised political violence with limited participation. Some examples of conspiracy are political assassination, small-scale terrorism, guerrilla wars and *coups d'etat*. Internal war is a highly organised political violence with widespread popular participation. It may attempt to overthrow the existing regime. Extensive violence, civil war and large-scale terrorism are some other dimensions of internal war.

Of late, two types of violence, namely communal violence and terrorism, have been discussed. Communal violence may take place within a community among various groups like religious groups, caste groups, linguistic groups etc. But, in most cases, communal violence refers to clashes between the followers of different religions. For example, in our own country, the unfortunate clashes between the Hindus and the Muslims are considered to be communal riots. Such riots create not only law and order problems but also strained relations among the people. It is a serious social problem, particularly, for a multi-religious country like ours.

Terrorism is a special form of violence which is fast spreading. You must have heard about the hijacking of planes, bombing of religious places and hostage takings. The bombing of the World Trade Centre in the United States of America and the attack on our

Parliament building are some recent examples of terrorism. Terrorism may be defined as a type of disguised violence based on the indiscriminate use of violence for altering the state of mind of a nation or group whose members are attacked. The primary objective of terrorists is to create terror in the minds of people and groups who are their targets. Indiscriminate violence against innocent people is used for a variety of reasons. One reason is to force a nation to carry out the terrorists' goal. For example, a group of terrorists hijacked an Indian Airlines plane from Kathmandu (Nepal) in 1999 and held hundreds of passengers hostage in Kandhar (Afghanistan) for several days while demanding that India release three terrorists serving jail terms in the Indian prisons. Another objective of a terrorist violence is to attract attention to the terrorist cause. Terrorists mobilise the mass media to spread a message for which dramatic violent acts are performed. It gives publicity to the terrorists. It helps them to instill fear in the minds of the people. In several parts of the world, terrorist activities are highly organised and even funded by the respective governments.

Problem of Violence

Social change may at times operate through institutional means. They are considered institutional because they are legal, legitimate and socially sanctioned. These channels are accepted by the society as changes induced through these means are smooth and in conformity with social

values. However, sociologists have also examined the use of violence and conflicts as strategies to effect change.

There are two basic issues involved in the linkages between social change and violent strategy. In the first place, tension and violence may be a natural outcome of social change. Secondly, conflict and violence may be taken as an instrument to effect change and transformation. Both these issues have been consistently debated all over the world. However, the discussion in this section will be limited to only those change efforts in which violent means are deliberately used in bringing about social change.

Human beings have been always inspired to establish a social order which ensures freedom. The freedom from hunger, misery, exploitation and injustice has, therefore, been a desired goal of every human group. But, despite significant scientific and technological advancements the institutional structure has not been able to achieve the goal. Inequality of wealth, status and power continues to characterise the world social order. Such a social system perpetuates exploitation, increases inequality and sustains discrimination. Under these circumstances, the disadvantaged sections of society may violently react against such inequalities to alter the existing situation.

Nonetheless, it is to be noted that such violent reactions assume two forms. While the reactions of some groups and classes are sporadic and temporary, some are involved in sustained violent activities. The violent

reactions of the first group of people are temporary in nature because, for them, violence and conflict are not based on an ideology. They are merely an expression of anger against the prevailing exploitative system. Thus, such groups normally combine violent struggles with non-violent activities. The struggle of the factory workers, for example, may become violent in certain cases. But such violence may not sustain for long.

On the other hand, certain groups are under the influence of revolutionary ideology. Such groups repose faith in the strategy of class struggle and accept violence as the means for bringing about social change. The most suitable example in this regard is that of the Marxists. Marxian ideals recognise struggle as an instrument of revolution and highlight violent struggle as the driving force in history. Consequently, most of the struggles that are influenced by this ideology assume a violent form. Contemporary Marxist revolutionaries emphasise the role of guerrilla war as an appropriate means of insurrection and revolt.

What we are trying to show is that violence is also a strategy of change. Spontaneous violence is a common means through which the deprived groups attract attention to their grievances. They go beyond the accepted means to promote change. The use of violent strategies, thus, threatens the existing political system and ignores the established procedures. Therefore, it is called extra-legal or extra-constitutional means. The Naxalite

movement in India is a good example in this respect. However, not all violent activities of this type achieve desired goals. Many individuals participate in such activities to procure goods and articles, money and materials through looting and vandalism. They use the occasion to vent their anger against specific shopkeepers and merchants who had not obliged them earlier.

Normally, the use of violent strategies is not considered a desirable means to bring about social change. The use of violence disturbs peace in the society and in reality inhibits the process of planned social change. Moreover, violence tends to restrict the emergence of a truly democratic and humanistic society. It negatively affects individual personality. Thus, the appropriate strategy to change a society is a sustained non-violent struggle.

CRIME IN INDIA

It should be distinctly clear by now that crime is a serious social problem and it arises out of pathological social conditions. Crimes are committed in all societies, but there may be difference in their nature and degree across societies. Our own country is no exception to this pattern. Although the official crime statistics in India have some obvious limitations, we can ascertain enough facts from them to identify trends in this regard.

The crime statistics show that out of the total crime committed in India every year, approximately 16 lakh

crimes are cognisable crimes under the Indian Penal Code (IPC). These crimes include theft, burglary, robbery, murder, kidnapping, cheating etc. As against this, the number of offences under local and special laws is about 35 lakh. These comprise crimes related to gambling, dowry, prohibition, drug abuse, immoral trafficking etc. It is interesting to point out here that, compared to several developed countries, the crime rate in India is not very high. The crime rate per lakh population in our own country is 614.79, in Canada it is 10,955, in Britain it is 10,404 and in the United States of America it is 5,898.

The pattern of cognisable crimes suggests that, of the total offences, 14.4 per cent are violent crimes like murder, rape, kidnapping etc., 26 per cent are property crimes, 3.1 per cent are white-collar crimes such as cheating, breach of trust, and the rest (56.5 per cent) are uncategorised crimes. According to the *Crime in India* statistics of 1994, crime rate is the highest in the age group of 18-30 years (51 per cent), less than 1 per cent (0.2 per cent) in the age group of below 16 years, about 1 per cent (1.2 per cent) in the age group 16-18 years, 41 per cent in the age group 30-50 years and 7 per cent in the age group of 50 plus.

We have described briefly these facts to highlight the crime scenario in India. In presenting these facts our objective is to indicate how motives for conformity to social norms are declining day-by-day in our country. This

dimension of the problem will be further evident when we examine some major types of crime committed in India.

Juvenile Delinquency

The sociological understanding regards a delinquent as a member of a group who deviates from group norms. In this context, crimes committed by children are considered differently from those of the adults. In case of the misconduct of a juvenile, the focus is on two aspects—age and conduct. Age is important from the point of view of maturity. A child below a certain age is considered immature and, therefore, irresponsible. Conduct, on the other hand, is taken as an important aspect of delinquency because if not checked in time the young offender may become an adult criminal.

Ordinarily, in terms of age, a juvenile delinquent is considered an under-age criminal. A child who is between the age of 7 and 16 or 18 years is included under this category. In India, the maximum age today for juvenile delinquents is 16 years for boys and 18 years for girls. It has been estimated that of the total delinquencies committed by the juveniles, hardly 2 per cent cases come to the notice of the police and courts. The National Crime Records Bureau data show that in India about 50 thousand delinquencies were committed under the Indian Penal Code and about 85 thousand under the local and special laws upto the last decade. The highest number of delinquencies committed by the children has had economic

motivation such as theft, burglary and robbery. Similarly, rates of delinquency are higher for boys than girls, that is, girls commit fewer crimes than boys.

A number of factors are responsible for increase in the cases of juvenile delinquencies. Broadly, they may be divided under two categories: individual factors and situational factors. Individual factors consist of personality traits like hostility, feeling of insecurity, fear, emotional conflict, defiance etc. The situational factors include family environment, peer group influence, school environment, influence of movies and so on. While individual factors are no doubt important, the changing social environment has become more significant in inducing young people to delinquency. It hardly needs elaboration that harmful and immoral acts like smoking, drinking, violence and brutality depicted in a large number of movies and story books leave a lasting impression on the fragile minds of the children. They learn new techniques of violence and crime through movies. The reported cases of involvement of young people in numerous crimes using methods learnt from these sources amply support our contention.

White-Collar Crime or Occupational Crime

It was E.H. Sutherland, a criminologist, who identified and highlighted for the first time the nature of white-collar crime. Sutherland defined white-collar crime as "a violation of the criminal law

by a person of the upper socio-economic class in the course of his occupational activities." He further added that the upper socio-economic class is defined not only by its wealth but also by its respectability and prestige in society. However, the term 'white-collar' is no longer popular and in its place the term 'occupational crime' is more frequently used in literature. Thus, violations of law committed by groups like businesspersons, professionals and government officials in connection with their occupations are considered as white-collar or occupational crimes. The scope of occupational crime has now been widened to include even misrepresentation in advertising, violation of labour laws, financial manipulation and violation of copyright laws.

There are different kinds of occupational crimes witnessed in India today. They are being committed not only by the upper section of the people but also by the people from the middle and the lower classes. Such crimes have an economic content and involve financial transactions. Therefore, sometimes they are also called 'economic crimes'.

In India, some common economic offences are concealment of income, avoiding payment of taxes and seeking illegal personal gratification like false sales, Hawala transactions, embezzlements of public fund, adulteration of food and drugs, banking and insurance frauds, foreign exchange violation, hoarding and black-marketing are

some other examples of economic offences.

It should be noted here that the nature and number of white-collar crimes have changed in India during the last few decades. Obviously, it is with the result of the expansion and change in economic activities in the country. People are motivated more by personal gains and profits and less by societal interests. The problem assumes a serious proportion when it is found that while ordinary criminals are afraid of enforcement agencies like police, the white-collar offenders do not feel so. Consequently, despite the increasing incidences of economic offences, the number of persons prosecuted and punished has not gone up.

Organised Crime

So far, we have discussed crimes mainly committed by individuals. But there are crimes which are based on group efforts. Crime that involves a group of persons for its execution is called organised crime. It is like a teamwork that is executed in a well-organised fashion. Criminologists have identified three major types of organised crime. They are gang criminality, racketeering and syndicated crime. Gang criminality includes extortion, robbery and kidnapping. Such crimes are committed through gangs of tough and hardened criminals. Racketeering involves dishonest way of getting money by cheating people, selling adulterated commodities, spurious drugs etc. Racketeers also act as protectors of illegitimate business. It is a common

crime in large cities. Syndicated crime is carried out by an organised criminal gang and is often called mafia. The major influential mafias operate in metros like Mumbai, Kolkata and Delhi.

It is not very difficult to assess the prevalence of organised crimes in India.

The number of such crimes has increased substantially and has covered large geographical areas. Betting, drug trafficking, automobile theft and supply of illegal arms to insurgents are some commonplace examples.

GLOSSARY

ANOMIE. This term was given by Emile Durkheim. It means the situation of normlessness

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY. Offences done by either a girl (below 18 years) or a boy (below 16 years).

STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE. Violence that breaks the harmony and existence of a social structure.

PERSONAL VIOLENCE. Violence against an individual.

EXERCISE

1. What do you understand by crime?
2. What are the four major explanations of crime?
3. How does Emile Durkheim explain individual deviation?
4. Differentiate between violence and aggression.
5. Explain the different types of violence.
6. How does violence lead to social change?

SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Ahuja, Ram, *Criminology*, Rawat Publications, Jaipur, 2000.
2. Chandra, Susil, *Sociology of Deviance in India*, Allied Publications, New Delhi, 1967.
3. Seth, H., *Juvenile Delinquency in Indian Setting*, Popular Prakashan, Mumbai, 1960.
4. Clinard, Marshall B., *Sociology of Deviant Behaviour*, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., New York, 1957.
5. Wickman, Peter, Phillip Whitten, and Robert Levey, *Criminology : Perspectives on Crime and Criminality*, Lexington Mass, Heath, 1980.